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# MONTHLY REVIEW

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1

## THE OLD LEFT AND THE NEW

THE EDITORS

## FRANTZ FANON: EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY

- PETER GEISMAR
- PETER WORSLEY

*Socialism in Africa* G. ARRIGHI & J. S. SAUL

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EDITORS: Paul M. Sweezy, Harry Magdoff
Leo Huberman (1903-1968)

## NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

We recently received from a California subscriber the following letter: "It is with deep regret that I must ask you to take me off your subscription roll, where I have been for so many years and with such profit. I am now 100 years and 8 months old and my eyes are failing. Also inflation is robbing me rapidly of financial independence. Believe me, I shall miss passing MR on to the younger generation as they are more than ever in need of the kind of knowledge it gives." We replied that we certainly would *not* take her off the sub list, that from now on she would receive MR free, and that we hoped she would continue passing her copies on to the younger generation. Let us add that we would be honored to put any other subscribers reaching 100 on the free list.

There has recently been a noticeable increase in orders for MR Press books for use in high schools. The most popular seem to be those dealing

(*Continued on inside back cover*)

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# *Announcement*

## *By Paul M. Sweezy*

With this issue MONTHLY REVIEW marks its twentieth anniversary and enters its third decade of publication.

The new volume now beginning is the first without Leo Huberman, co-founder and co-editor until his death last November 9th. As his colleague over these years, I am painfully aware that but for him there would be no MR today. Apart from everything else, it was his courage and dedication and hard work that enabled us to surmount the obstacles and difficulties which stood in the way of building up from scratch a completely independent socialist magazine in the conditions which prevailed in the United States in the late 1940's and early 1950's. In a very real sense MR is his creation, and I hope it will be his monument as long as it continues to exist.

Looking ahead, I would not want to carry on as MR's sole editor even if I could. To be fruitful, radical journalism has to be a cooperative effort. Ideas and analyses must be developed and tested in debate and discussion. Part of this can come in planned or unplanned encounters with a variety of interlocutors, but this is not enough. What is needed above all is interaction between people who understand each other and know how to benefit from mutual criticism and exchange of experience, and this presupposes continuous association. Leo Huberman and I had the makings of such a relationship as early as the 1930's, and it was put on a viable and lasting basis through our founding and editing MR together. Moreover, soon after MR began publication we were fortunate to become more



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and more closely associated with Paul Baran. For a number of reasons, among them geography, this was never formalized by his joining us as an MR editor, but that did not prevent the association from being continuous, intimate, and mutually beneficial.*

Even before Paul Baran's death in 1964, another relationship was established which added greatly to MR's intellectual resources. Leo and I found ourselves increasingly seeking and relying on the knowledge and judgment of Harry Magdoff whose experience in the U.S. economic setup during the Second World War had given him invaluable insights into the *modus operandi* of American imperialism and stimulated him to undertake a profound study of this crucially important world force. After Baran's death, our association with Harry Magdoff continued to develop to the point where we invited him to join us as an editor of MR either immediately or at any time that he might feel that a more formal connection with the magazine would be useful to him as well as to us.

At that time Harry Magdoff was immersed in his study of U.S. imperialism, and the matter of becoming an editor was not urgent. But after Leo Huberman's death the situation of course changed. I did not want to continue as sole editor, and I felt strongly that what I needed was not merely an informal consultant and adviser but a co-editor to assume responsibility with me for the magazine's contents and editorial policy. I renewed the invitation which Leo Huberman and I had extended to Harry Magdoff two or three years earlier, and I am happy to say that he graciously accepted. He has in fact been acting as co-editor for several months now, and with this twentieth anniversary issue it becomes official with the appearance of his name for the first time on the masthead.

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* For the record I would like to recall two other associations which were extremely important to MR in its early years—those with Max Werner, a brilliant European Marxist thinker of the interwar period who trained himself to become one of the most profound military analysts of our period; and with Michal Kalecki, the distinguished Polish economist who served for several years in the UN Secretariat in the late 1940's and early 1950's. These associations were unfortunately cut short by Werner's untimely death (he was only 49) in 1951 and Kalecki's return to Poland a year or so later.



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Harry Magdoff needs no introduction to MR readers: his articles on imperialism, which appeared in Volume 20 and have just been issued in book form, have been among the most widely read and appreciated in MR's history. I am sure that readers both here and abroad will share my satisfaction at his assuming the position of co-editor and will see in this a good sign that MR, as it enters its third decade, will continue to play a useful role in the international socialist movement. My own satisfaction with the new arrangement is the greater in that I am quite certain that it is what Leo Huberman would have favored.

## REVIEW OF THE MONTH

### THE OLD LEFT AND THE NEW

Even for those of us who lived through the period as political activists, it is hard to remember the state to which the radical movement had been reduced at the time when MR was founded two decades ago. The collapse was sudden and largely unexpected. The New Deal coalition had survived the war and seemed for a while to be on the verge of a new upsurge. A meeting was held in Chicago in 1947 under the auspices of the National Citizens Political Action Committee (NCPAC). Among those on the program, if memory serves, were Philip Murray of the CIO, Walter White of the NAACP, and James Patton of the National Farmers Union—the heads of what were then considered to be the most representative organizations of workers, Negroes, and farmers. The prospect of a New Deal comeback, perhaps in the elections of 1948, seemed favorable.



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It was just at this time that U.S. imperialism, sluggish in the depression decade of the 1930's but awakened and infused with new life and energy during the Second World War, set about staking out a claim to a worldwide empire. Ideologically, this took the form of the Truman Doctrine (March 1947) promising the "free world" protection against "indirect aggression" (i.e., revolution), while in practice it meant the inauguration of a campaign to extend U.S. economic and military control throughout the entire non-socialist world.

It is crucial to an understanding of the period to realize that a comeback of the New Deal coalition at this stage would have forestalled the development of the internal unity needed by a resurgent U.S. imperialism, and would have strengthened an already powerful trend to the Left in the advanced capitalist countries of Europe. Preventing such disasters therefore became the number one objective of the U.S. ruling class's domestic policy.

It was against this background that the great red-baiting crusade of the postwar period unfolded, raining hammer blows on the none too sturdy structure of the popular movement and its radical cadres. The NCPAC split, with a large proportion of its liberal followers withdrawing to form the red-baiting Americans for Democratic Action (ADA). The left unions were expelled from the CIO. The leaders of the Communist Party were tried and convicted under the Smith Act. Alger Hiss, selected as the ideal symbol of the whole generation of New Deal intellectuals, was smeared with the brush of treason. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were railroaded to their deaths and Morton Sobell was sentenced to thirty years in prison for refusing to play the role of informer. And to cap it all came the years of McCarthyite terror and purge.

Under this terrific pressure the old Left simply disintegrated, leaving here and there only a few isolated groups or individuals to try to keep alive a tradition of radical thought or to set an example of radical action. The situation was described and analyzed with what we can now recognize as amazing accuracy by Paul Baran as early as July 1950. Participating in a discussion on the subject of "Cooperation on the Left," he argued that the eclipse of radicalism which had characterized



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the preceding few years was not likely to be a mere passing phenomenon.* The reason was that American capitalism had entered a period of relative stability, both economic and ideological. This stemmed not from any basic change in the economic system but from the fact that the ruling class had acquired a "manipulative ability" vastly greater than in any previous period. In his own words:

> Big business and its strategists have learned much more thoroughly than is frequently believed (and frequently suggested by old-fashioned holdover ideologists from the liberal age) the lessons of the Great Depression, the devices elaborated by Keynes and his school, and the implications of the war experience. They know perfectly well that employment can be "made," that its level can be pre-determined within fairly narrow limits, and that keeping it somewhere not too far from full employment . . . is the only course compatible with political security and good profits. The issue of financing the government's "full-employment" policies is by now largely a red herring. Nowadays, neither budget deficits nor the resulting increases in the public debt frighten any one who matters. What does remain a major, indeed a crucial, issue is to find suitable ways of spending the amounts of money that may be required to maintain, say, the present "comfortable" level of underemployment. All outlets that would be rational in the sense that they would contribute to the increase of human welfare, are more or less incompatible with the vested interests of the ruling classes. Payment of doles tends to raise the wage level; government investment in steel, chemicals, public utilities, etc., tends to destroy carefully erected monopolistic fortresses. And so it goes. If the problem were to spend one or two billion a year, a solution could be found at the expense of less powerful interests. But with anything from $15 to $20 billion to be pressed into the income stream, the difficulties are well-nigh insuperable.
>
> Or rather they would be if it weren't for the Cold War.
>
> The Cold War seems to solve this problem in a most admirable way. No interests that matter are violated as long as the money is spent on armaments and foreign operations. The short-run effect on employment and profits is the same as if the expenditures were of a "rational" type, and the long-run effect is even better since no new productive equipment is created to compete with existing facilities.
>
> This "economic" solution must be supported by a suitable

* MR, July 1950, pp. 82-86. It was characteristic of the times that this piece of Baran's, like many others that appeared in the pages of MR during the early years, was signed with a pen name ("Historicus").



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political structure. This political structure is the systematically incited psychosis of the Cold War.

The Cold War is thus by no means irrational from the point of view of the American ruling classes. Everything synthesizes beautifully in its general effects. It provides the political climate in which an agreement can be extracted from the American people to spend $20 billion annually for military purposes. It sets the stage for the complete destruction of an independent labor movement: at the present time the CIO and the AFL are vying for the distinction of being accepted as the most faithful servant of American capitalism. It has reshuffled domestic political forces in such a way that openly fascist organizations and individuals, only a few years ago hiding in the underworld of American politics, are able to operate in the center of the political stage—witness the current McCarthy affair. And last but not least, it provides the grand strategy for expanding and protecting American investments abroad, investments that are very close to the hearts of the biggest American business interests. In one word: it furnishes the political formula for a concerted struggle for the preservation of capitalism abroad and for its strengthening and, if necessary, fascization at home.

To this Baran added an analysis of the weakness of what he called the "subjective factor":

We have to understand the ideologically overpowering impact of bourgeois, fetishistic consciousness on the broad masses of the working population. The still-vigorous belief in the possibilities of advancement within the framework of capitalist society. The deep-seated acceptance of bourgeois values, especially the desirability of reaching the status of the next-higher group. The supremely streamlined, multi-pronged manipulation of the public mind. The heart-breaking emptiness and cynicism of the commercial, competitive, capitalist culture. The systematic cultivation of devastatingly neurotic reactions to most social phenomena (through the movies, the "funnies," etc.). The effective destruction in schools, churches, press, everywhere, of everything that smacks of *solidarity* in the consciousness of the man in the street. And finally, the utterly paralyzing feeling of solitude which must overcome anyone who does not want to conform, the feeling that there is no movement, no camp, no group to which he can turn.

After noting that "social psychology and political experience alike suggest that the prospects are bleak," Baran went on to ask:



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Where does the Left and its cooperation come in? Not very much, not very broadly, not very obviously. The main avenue of activity is to attack on the ideological front—by clarifying the issues, by trying to cut through the cultural fog of capitalist society, by trying to break the notion of the "identity of interests" of the ruling classes and those of the working masses. This is not a program of mass politics, nor should it be the program of a sect. It is a blueprint of intellectual activity, of enlightened economic, ideological political thinking and discussion that should be free of dogmatic fetters and petty political considerations. It is a program of building cadres, of what Marx used to call *Selbstverständigung*.

There is hardly any room for political cooperation on the Left at the present time because there are no politics of the Left. The time will perhaps come, possibly sooner than we think. But just now the issues are ideological, and ideological problems cannot be solved by organizational makeshifts. . . . What is needed—let us say it again and again—is clarity, courage, patience, faith in the spontaneity of rational and socialist tendencies in society. At the present historical moment in our country—"better smaller but better."

This diagnosis of the country's condition and of the possibilities open to the Left remained substantially valid throughout the decade of the 1950's. This was the period of the silent generation on the nation's campuses, of the "end of ideology" for the intellectuals, and of the American Celebration for capitalism's high priests and pundits. But then, as Baran had correctly foreseen, the situation began to change and new perspectives to open up. Why?

It would be gratifying to be able to attribute these changes to the spontaneous growth of "rational and socialist tendencies," but unfortunately such was not the case. The explanation is in fact much more complicated; and while it is not incompatible with Baran's 1950 analysis, still it is entirely absent from that analysis.

To understand the transformation which took place during the 1960's one must stress not the manipulative ability of the ruling class but the limits to that manipulative ability. It is possible to stave off economic stagnation and mass unemployment by waging a Cold War which requires ever more billions of dollars to be spent on armaments with which to extend U.S. control throughout the length and breadth of the non-socialist



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world. But it is impossible to control the consequences of such a Cold War, either at home or abroad. Further, it is impossible, in a capitalist society, to prevent the capital accumulation process from exercising its normal polarizing effect, creating more and more wealth at the top and more and more poverty at the bottom. It is impossible to control, let alone eradicate, the ugly problems of racial and national oppression which are built into the very foundations of capitalism. And finally since we live "not by bread alone," the manipulation and systematic efforts at debasement of the public mind, while having the desired effect in the short run, tend sooner or later to generate a revolt among those who become conscious of their cultural and spiritual deprivation.

For all these reasons the very manipulative ability of the U.S. ruling class which was responsible for the relative stability of the 1950's produced its own negation in the 1960's. The global expansion of U.S. military power met with growing resistance. Cuba showed that revolution is possible in a small underdeveloped country, and in Vietnam a revolutionary people's war has developed to the point where it quite literally threatens the whole structure of American imperial power. In China and Vietnam, and increasingly elsewhere around the world, the colored peoples are standing up to the mighty United States—and proving that they can win. This has had a terrific impact inside the United States where the worst victims of the accumulation process are the blacks, the Puerto Ricans and the Mexican-Americans. Ground down from within and spurred on from without, these traditionally superexploited minorities are stepping onto the stage of history as conscious agents of revolutionary change. And there they are being joined in increasing numbers by the sons and daughters of the materially secure but culturally and spiritually deprived middle and upper income groups—young people who feel that their very existence is threatened by present and future wars they detest and who see in this society no hope for a decent future for themselves or anyone else.

From these elements there has grown a New Left wholly different from that Old Left which was shattered two decades ago. Whatever the ideological pronouncements of some of its



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segments, the Old Left was in fact a thoroughly reformist movement which aimed to achieve its goals within the framework of the existing capitalist society. It was because some of these goals, such as peace and friendship with the Soviet Union, contradicted the interests and needs of the dominant class in this society that the Old Left had to be smashed. The fragments to which it was reduced, however, were not transformed by the experience: they simply remained reformist fragments. And they had absolutely nothing to do, practically or theoretically or any other way, with the birth and rise of the New Left.

The latter, as we have already noted, had its roots in the specific historical experiences of the 1950's and 1960's. The black and the brown and the young reacted to these experiences at a gut level. Angered and revolted by what they experienced in their own lives and by what they saw going on in the world at large, they struck out at what they conceived to be the perpetrators of these evils. At first their objectives tended to be articulated as demands for instant reforms or changes in policy ("Freedom Now!", "End the War in Vietnam!", etc.). But gradually they learned through practical experience that those on whom the system confers real power were not about to accede to these demands, preferring instead to crack open the heads of the demanders. It was in this way that the New Left, or at least the more advanced elements within it, developed rapidly into an outspokenly revolutionary movement: an evil system which cannot or will not reform itself must be overthrown and replaced by a better one. A Liberation News Service dispatch from Austin, Texas, reporting on the latest meeting of the National Council of the SDS, indicates how far the movement has advanced in this direction:

> SDS has given sweeping support to the program and leadership of the Black Panther Party.
>
> In a key resolution approved enthusiastically at the quarterly National Council (NC) meeting of SDS, the organization indicated that it hopes to firm up the rather informal alliance that it has developed with the Panthers in practice in the past year. . . .
>
> Specifically, SDS endorsed the Panther notion of "liberation in the colony" accompanied by "revolution in the mother country." This ideological principle accepts the notion of revolutionary nationalism, while rejecting cultural nationalism or separatist no-



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tions. The Panthers have explicitly stated that their liberation struggle must relate to the revolutionary struggle of white people in the "mother country." In the resolution, SDS recognized the Panthers as a revolutionary vanguard and urged its chapters to support the Panther program, while combating white racism and developing SDS's own anti-capitalist program.

What a distance we've come in a few short years! In place of the reformist Old Left which dreamt of uniting whites and blacks under a single leadership and achieving its aims through pressure politics, we now have a New Left which understands and accepts (1) the necessity of revolution and (2) that at least for the foreseeable future whites and blacks must organize separately while struggling together.

The situation today is thus radically different from what it was two decades ago when MR was founded. And yet it would be a mistake to assume that nothing that was said then has validity now. We must retain a sense of perspective: the New Left, like its predecessor, is still small. It has hardly touched the masses of blue- and white-collar workers; and where it has, the reaction has tended to be negative rather than positive. And without the masses, what Paul Baran said in 1950 is still true, "there are no politics of the Left."

Wherever and whenever this is true, however the surrounding conditions may differ in other respects, there are certain tasks which can be neglected only at the risk of jeopardizing the whole future of the movement. The New Left in the United States today is revolutionary, and that is all to the good. But despite all the revolutionary talk one hears among radical young people, many have no clear idea of what a revolution implies and no one knows how a revolution is going to be made in a country like ours. In these circumstances the problems which Paul Baran highlighted in 1950 retain all their relevance and importance—the problems of ideology, of building cadres, of *Selbstverständigung*. It is a long and difficult struggle we have entered into, and those who stay the course and rise to their responsibilities in the process will need understanding as well as passion and will power.

During its first two decades MR has tried to do its bit to help solve these problems of the struggle on the ideological front.



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And now as the magazine enters its third decade, the editors re-dedicate themselves to this task, asking as they have many times before for the aid and advice and cooperation of our readers. Tell us of your needs, criticize our performance. Together we can make MR an ever more effective weapon in the struggle.

(April 10, 1969)

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The duty and the highest obligation of every honest journalist, and double for a Communist one, is unconditional truth—nothing but the truth.

*—Lenin*

We should not forget that our tradition is one of protest and revolt, and it is stultifying to celebrate the rebels of the past—Jefferson and Paine, Emerson and Thoreau—while we silence the rebels of the present.

*—Henry Steele Commager*

During an interspace of silence, I interrupted the revolutionist and philosopher in these fateful words: "What is?"

In deep and solemn tone, he replied, "Struggle."

At first it seemed as though I had heard the echo of despair; but peradventure, it was the law of life.

*—John Swinton, in an interview with Karl Marx*



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# SOCIALISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN TROPICAL AFRICA

BY GIOVANNI ARRIGHI
AND JOHN S. SAUL

A sophisticated socialist position in contemporary Africa must fuse a concern for an increased rate of economic development with a perception of the role played in the development process by the existence and emergence of classes and groups with divergent interests and differential access to benefits. Only if these factors are taken into account can one understand the extent to which the productive potential of African societies, and therefore their development and structural transformation, are constrained by the present pattern of world and domestic economy and society. The available surplus is being drained away, for example, as the repatriated profits of overseas firms; or it is consumed by self-indulgent domestic elites. As a consequence, the generation of a larger surplus from an aroused and mobilized peasantry is discouraged. It is, in brief, the pattern of inequality which tends to hamper a rise in productivity.

In this situation a viable socialist strategy will have to face dilemmas of choice in three closely related policy spheres. On the international level, it will confront the specter of international capitalism and a grave inequality of financial power—realities which place major constraints on general development. On the domestic scene, it will face the problem of the relationship between "town," the center of administration and of such industrialization as takes place, and "country"—a relationship

This is a condensation by the authors of a much longer study with the same title, which appeared in the *Journal of Modern African Studies,* VI, 2 (1968), pp. 141-169. Messrs. Arrighi and Saul teach economics and political science respectively at University College in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.



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from which real development could spring but which all too often defines a split between unequal and unconnected spheres of a society falling short of genuine transformation. Finally, such a socialist strategy will have the problem of agricultural development itself in a rural sphere where inequalities can and do begin to emerge, although, at least in the short run, these have a rather more ambiguous impact on the pace of development than the other inequalities already alluded to. We will attempt briefly to analyze the nature of the contemporary African situation in order to provide a backdrop against which any serious debate on revolutionary strategy in independent Africa must, in the future, be set.

## I

The vast majority of the population of tropical Africa consists of independent producers who, except in marginal ways, do not depend on wage employment for their subsistence. In order to promote the productivity of these producers, two problems have to be faced: (a) the problem of creating incentives to bring idle land and labor into production and (b) the problem of using the surplus actually produced by the peasantry in such a way as to promote the steady growth of labor productivity. The first problem is related to the ability of the modern sector to create incentives to increased productivity in the traditional sector; while the second problem is related to the types of organization of production and socio-economic institutions in the traditional sector which are most likely to evoke desired responses to stimuli generated in the modern sector.

Most traditional sectors of African economies still have some surplus productive capacity since population pressure on the land, though growing, is generally not yet severe. For this reason the first of these two problems must be given a central position in any discussion of African economic development.

There are three main forms of surplus absorption in the modern sectors of present-day African economies: the export of profits and investment income in general; the discretionary consumption of a small "labor aristocracy"; and productive investment, embodying capital-intensive techniques, mainly concentrated in sectors other than those producing capital goods.



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To take the last point first: the use of capital-intensive techniques of production in Africa is not only the result of technological factors. In addition, the investment policies of the modern international corporations in underdeveloped economies and the wage and salary policies of the independent African governments (which, in turn, depend upon the character of their power base) are equally relevant.*[1] With regard to the former, the fact that methods of management, organization, and control have evolved in the metropolitan centers and cannot be easily adapted to the conditions obtaining in underdeveloped areas has meant that labor-intensive techniques are often not even taken into consideration by the corporations. More important still, the corporations apply to all their branches technical methods corresponding to their financial position, and this implies capital-intensive techniques irrespective of the situation in the territories where the investment takes place.

But capital-intensity has also been favored by the salary and wage policy of independent African governments.

Salary structures were inherited from previous colonial regimes; and, as Africans gradually entered the civil service and took over managerial positions in large foreign concerns, they received the basic salaries already attached to the posts. A huge gap between the incomes of the elites and sub-elites in bureaucratic employment on the one hand and the mass of wage workers on the other thus appeared, bringing the whole level of labor incomes into question. Given the political influence of urban workers on African governments, which are the major employers of labor, a steady rise in wages ensued. This steady rise is of course favored by, and tends to strengthen, the capital-intensity bias of investment. Capital-intensity means that labor is a lower proportion of costs, so that the individual concern is more willing to concede wage increases (especially foreign oligopolies which can pass on cost increases to the consumer). And this in turn reinforces the tendency toward capital-intensive growth, and so on in an upward spiral.

With regard to the distribution of productive investment between sectors, there seem to be two main reasons, besides

* Notes will be found at the end of the article.



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obvious technological factors, for the observed underinvestment in the capital goods industries of tropical Africa. In the first place, the very bias in favor of capital-intensive techniques discussed above tends to promote the use of highly specialized machinery and consequently restrains the growth of demand for capital goods that could be produced locally. Secondly, in non-industrialized economies the market for capital goods is small, and if such goods are to be produced at all there must be good reasons to believe that the whole economy will develop rapidly and in such a way as to nourish a market for capital goods. The great calculating rationality, care, and circumspection in approaching new developments that characterize modern corporations prevent the repetition of the process, typical of the nineteenth century, whereby competitive entrepreneurs and financial groups often undertook investments which were actually "unjustified" by market conditions but which nonetheless fostered the industrialization of less-developed economies.

The lack of development of the capital goods sector restrains the expansion of productive capacity and of the internal market, perpetuating the dependence of the tropical African economies on the growth of demand for their primary products in the industrial centers. It is not surprising therefore that these economies have been unable to grow faster than their exports.

In the period 1960-1965, per capita real product increased at an average rate of 2.0 percent per annum. This relatively low rate of growth, combined with the effects of the "wage-mechanization" spiral discussed above, has resulted in a *decrease* in the proportion of the labor force in wage employment in most countries, and has been accompanied by a widening gap between urban and rural incomes. Not all categories of urban workers have benefited from this widening gap. A large proportion of them consists of semi-proletarianized peasants who periodically engage in wage employment. This migrant labor force is not "stabilized" and in general does not acquire the degree of specialization required in industrial enterprises which use capital-intensive techniques. These laborers as a class cannot gain from the "wage-mechanization" spiral since higher individual incomes are matched by a reduction in their wage-employment opportunities.



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The higher wages and salaries, however, induce the better paid section of the labor force to sever their ties with the traditional societies. Their consequent stabilization in the wage economy promotes specialization, greater bargaining power, and further increases in their incomes, which tend to become three or more times higher than those of unskilled workers. The standards of living of this tiny section of the working class approximate and often surpass those of the lower strata of the elites in bureaucratic employment in the civil service and international corporations. It must therefore be included with the latter in what may be called, somewhat inappropriately, the labor aristocracy of tropical Africa. It is the discretionary, and indeed conspicuous, consumption of this "aristocracy" which absorbs a significant proportion of the surplus produced in the money economy.

The third significant form of surplus absorption is the profits, interest, dividends, fees, etc., transferred abroad by the international corporations. Foreign private investment in underdeveloped economies has been, in the recent past, an efficient device for transferring surplus generated abroad to the advanced capitalist countries. Insofar as tropical Africa is concerned, this transfer of surplus is bound to increase in the future for obvious reasons. It seems in fact that returns of the order of 15-20 percent on capital, usually on the basis of an investment maturing in about three years, are required to attract foreign capital in tropical Africa. It follows that, in order to offset the outflow of profits, foreign investment in the area must steadily grow at a rate of 11-14 percent per year, which can hardly be expected in economies growing at a rate of 4-5 percent. Thus, while the transfer of surplus has been somewhat contained during the present phase of easy import substitution, the outflow can only become more serious in the years ahead as that phase comes to an end.

The development potential of this pattern of surplus absorption is remarkably poor. The slow growth of the money economy and the concurrent high rate of mechanization and automation hold back the growth of wage employment opportunities for the peasantry. More important still, the absorption of a considerable share of the surplus by the discretionary



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consumption of the labor aristocracy (which directly and/or indirectly creates demand in the industrial centers), and by the transfer of investment incomes abroad, restrains the growth of internal demand for peasant produce. As a consequence the creation of stimuli to increase productivity in the rural areas is left to the sluggish expansion of foreign demand for African produce. The stagnation of peasant incomes and productivity has in turn a negative impact on the growth potential of the modern sector itself, since it further hampers the expansion of the internal market. In the light of these considerations, the current economic growth of tropical Africa may properly be characterized, in Ignacy Sachs's terminology, as "perverse growth," i.e., growth which undermines rather than enhances the potentialities of the economy for long-term development.[2]

The foregoing analysis suggests the advisability of a policy of disengagement from international capitalism. It also suggests, however, that such a disengagement is not a sufficient condition for development. The labor aristocracy can in fact be expected to continue to use its power in the state-controlled modern sector in order to appropriate a considerable share of the surplus in the form of increasing discretionary consumption. Under these conditions "perverse growth" would persist, notwithstanding state ownership of the means of production. In order to achieve "real" long-term development, disengagement from international capitalism will have to be accompanied by a change in the power base of African governments.

## II

In contemporary tropical Africa many striking ambiguities are readily identifiable on the ideological plane. Ideas about "development" and "equality" are not systematically linked, and "socialist" strategies emerge which leave much to be desired. And it is well to note that these ambiguities have tended to characterize the discussion of policy even in those African states which have professed themselves to be the most radical.

There has, for example, been little grasp, within the doctrine of "African socialism," of the nature of the inequalities discussed above. There has been a failure to face up to the necessity for policies which would divert a good proportion of



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the surplus from urban consumptionism (with an import and luxury bias) to rural incentives and capital formation. To be sure, occasional attacks upon trade unions and trading groups (generally those of non-African origin) are justified as a redressing of inequalities which hinder socially beneficial capital accumulation, but such a line of analysis is seldom rigorously applied to the society as a whole. (In the case of trade unions, the attacks, despite the rhetoric, have generally involved a politically motivated exercise of institutional control rather than a concerted effort to institute wage restraint.)

Thus perceived inequalities get very easily swallowed up and analytically blurred within the framework provided by the continent's distinctive "socialist" ideology. Here we refer to that strand of the ideology which has been characterized by Peter Worsley as "populism."[3] In Africa this has involved the claim, by almost all leaders, that African societies are, even now, classless. The foundations for pervasive social solidarity are supposed to be found in traditional society and to exclude any socio-economically meaningful stratification.

Just as the populist strand in "African socialism" obscures the realities of class formation, so it is important, if somewhat paradoxical, to observe that much of the criticism of "neo-colonialism" in Africa has served to obscure the realities of international capitalism's involvement on the continent. For again, despite the rhetoric, all states have felt it necessary to deal with "the enemy." At the same time they have seldom felt compelled to undertake a serious analysis of the impact on their own economies and societies of investment by an increasingly monopolistic brand of international capitalism in terms of the choice of techniques, the absorption of labor, the reinvestment of profits, and the generation of internal demand. For example, the possibility that many, if not most, forms of imported capital may be worse than none at all, despite the subsequent existence of plant on the ground and a handful of indigenous employees, is seldom brought to debate. Policy statements thus oscillate rather erratically between the abstract slogans of "neo-colonialism," a useful instrument with which to forge national unity behind the leaders, and a "forced" ac-



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ceptance of the "necessity" to encourage foreign investment in order to obtain skills and equipment.

More than mere intellectual confusion is at stake here, of course: these ideological strands must be situated in relation to the social structure of contemporary African societies. In colonial and economically underdeveloped Africa an indigenous dominant class with power grounded in the process of production had, by and large, not developed (though the emergence of an indigenous trading class, particularly in West Africa, cannot be wholly ignored and has played an important role in determining the course of some "socialist" experiments). As a consequence the political and bureaucratic groups which did rise to prominence were characterized by what Roger Murray has called a greater "relative social autonomy and plasticity."[4] After independence, when past education, political record, and current bureaucratic position came to be the chief determinants of privilege in the new society, a rather narrow vested interest in the system and a growing consciousness of a differential position vis-à-vis the mass became dominant features of the new elites—*une bourgeoisie plus proche d'un mandarinat,* as Dia has called them.

It is within this context that one must place trends to an increased centralization of power and ideological myth-making for popular consumption which can be seen to express a clear institutional and, behind that, class interest. And within this framework much state intervention, only marginally related to a generalized socialist development strategy, can be at least partly explained as the conscious proliferation of jobs for incoming recruits to the dominant group. At the very least, given the nature of the bureaucratic elite, any glib identification, by leaders or observers, of socialism in Africa with *étatisme* and policies of economic centralization must be viewed with suspicion. And of course a sustained stand against the blandishments of foreign capitalism, or even a critical scrutiny of its potential contributions, cannot be expected from such a group.

Much evidence is available to demonstrate the importance of these patterns even in such states as Guinea, Mali, and Nkrumah's Ghana; there too the burden of the expensive ad-



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ministrative structure and of urban consumptionism pressed upon the surplus.[5] Insofar as real attempts were made to escape from the irrationalities involved, as in Ghana, the absence of a mass social and political base rendered them half-hearted and self-defeating. Moreover, in their relationship with international capitalism, Ghana and Guinea were not so different from less militant regimes, and equally short-sighted. Thus it has been strongly argued that Nkrumah's policies in this sphere, as epitomized by the Volta River Project, merely resulted in a marginal redefinition of "the politics of mediation," in the suggestive phrase of Fitch and Oppenheimer.[6]

This is not surprising: any serious attempt to face up to international capitalism would presuppose a growing awareness of the centrality of the pattern of surplus absorption and utilization to development strategy, and some readiness to correct existing irrationalities. The inevitable corollary, however, would have to be a parallel attack on the privileges of those very classes which constitute the power base of most African governments. Any strategy directed toward socialist construction in Africa must therefore face up to the full complexities involved in creating a state power dedicated to the task, and in generating or tapping social forces capable of underpinning such a state.

It is perhaps possible that such a novel power base could be found by combining elements of a mobilized peasantry and a transformed urban and rural proletariat, thereby producing a genuine "workers and peasants" state. Tanzania is the country in contemporary Africa where socialist aspirations figure most prominently in the development equation and most powerfully affect the policies which are being pursued. For the President, Julius K. Nyerere, has increasingly displayed, in a series of important policy documents, a sophisticated awareness of many of the patterns of African change which we have discussed: the importance of the rural-urban dichotomy, the relative lack of socialist direction provided by a mere "attitude of mind," some of the ambiguities of foreign economic involvement in the domestic economy, and the realities of rural stratification. This has led, among other things, to the "Arusha Declaration," which embodies an attempt to enact a self-denying ordinance



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against many kinds of economic aggrandizement by the elite (especially as regards the ownership of property); to the nationalization of banks, insurance companies, export-import houses, and certain processing and manufacturing concerns, with some eye to relating their investment and other decisions more directly to the interests of national development; and even to the introduction into the policy debate of the theme of socialist modes of production for the rural sector.

Yet the ruling Tanzanian party has remained relatively untransformed and ineffective for mobilizing peasants and workers behind such programs in any coherent way, and a systematic industrialization strategy along the lines articulated above is still lacking. These weaknesses could well undermine Nyerere's attempt to channel the efforts of political and bureaucratic elites in a direction likely to ensure genuine development. Finally, it must be said that even if the Tanzanian effort is one which deserves support, however qualified, from all socialists, it remains a relatively isolated experiment. In most African countries the incumbent leadership is much more compromised, and the quality of the political parties ostensibly working toward "socialist" goals leaves much to be desired. Even more ominously, the character of intra-elite competition in contemporary Africa, and in particular the rise of the military to a position of special prominence, show the strength of forces driving the situation in a counterrevolutionary direction.[7]

NOTES

1. On this general subject see also G. Arrighi, "International Corporations, Labor Aristocracies, and Economic Development in Tropical Africa," in David Horowitz, ed., *The Corporations and the Cold War* (Monthly Review Press, forthcoming).

2. Cf. Ignacy Sachs, "On Growth Potential, Proportional Growth, and Perverse Growth" in *Czechoslovak Economic Papers* (Prague), VII, 1966.

3. Cf. Peter Worsley, *The Third World,* London, 1964, ch. 4. For a detailed critique of "populism," see John S. Paul, "On African Populism," in E. Gellner and G. Ionescu, eds., *Populism* (forthcoming).

4. Roger Murray, "Militarism in Africa," *New Left Review,* 38.

5. See Samir Amin, *Trois Expériences africaines de développement* (Paris, 1965).

6. Bob Fitch and Mary Oppenheimer, *Ghana: End of an Illusion* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1966).

7. See Roger Murray, "Militarism in Africa," *New Left Review,* 38.



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# FRANTZ FANON: EVOLUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY

## A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

By Peter Geismar

Although an important part of his time was spent within the Algerian Revolution, Frantz Fanon ended his life dedicated to a larger African Revolution. As a psychiatrist and a Marxist, Fanon was able to calculate the traumatic and material cost of Africa's recent occupation. He died at thirty-seven of leukemia while attempting to prescribe a cure for the "benefits" the West had brought there.

Fanon was, first of all, a skillful propagandist writing to combat years of reactionary European ideologies in the Third World. He knew that nationalism, a European import that had been turned against the Europeans, could also undermine Africa's own future. Fanon's great hope was for a United States of Africa which could work with Asia and Latin America

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The author recently finished a doctoral dissertation on the Algerian Revolution (1954-1962) and is now at work on a biography of Fanon. The sources used in this article include Fanon's own writings, especially those in *El Moudjahid,* as well as the few essays published about him in French quarterlies. The material on Fanon's personal life was drawn from several months of interviews with his old acquaintances and former colleagues in Paris and Lyon. Monsieur J. M. Domenach, editor of *Esprit,* and Professor M. Colin, of the University of Lyon, were particularly helpful in supplying useful information.



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in a campaign to extract indemnification from Europe and the United States. There was still enough natural wealth left in the Third World to allow it to negotiate with the West—providing a new set of alliances was constructed to protect the true interests of the underdeveloped nations. Paradoxically, death in a Washington, D.C. military hospital ended Fanon's career as a revolutionary journalist before he could achieve a substantial following outside the United States and Europe.

Fanon does have a following in Algeria. Several high governmental officials truly respected him. Many others find in him today a convenient and safe object of admiration. Fanon's wife, now in Algiers and on the staff of his old newspaper, can send their child to the Frantz Fanon High School somewhere near Boulevard Frantz Fanon. Still, Josie Fanon lives in a society that her husband would find distressing: too much hypocrisy, power hoarded and sought after as money is in a capitalist society, all the trimmings of a revolution without the content. She will remain there, however, since she is white and her son black; both will at least have a more dignified existence in Algeria than in her French homeland.

Much of Fanon's own life was spent in the metropolitan territory of the empire that he worked to destroy. He came from Martinique to Lyon to begin his high school education and remained there through medical school. Lyon is a deceptively calm French provincial city on the Rhone River where gentle hills begin to rise into the Alps. Behind the gaudy façade of its Second Empire architecture, Lyon has a long tradition of tough radicalism; today there is a strong left-wing student movement in its university. Fanon had been part of the movement before 1952 as an editor of a mimeographed newspaper, *Tom Tom,* which urged a solidarity of black students in all the French overseas possessions.

At the university, however, most of Fanon's close friends were white; and he himself was torn between a bourgeois career and revolutionary activism. In medical school he decided to specialize in legal medicine. But he could not carry out the tasks essential to the profession; while performing autopsies he would shake so with surgical instrument in hand that not only was the cadaver left in a sorry condition, but also the professor



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and students observing became unbearably nervous. There were other conflicts making his life difficult: while he was one of the founders of the contemporary Black Power Movement, in Lyon it seems that Fanon fell in love only with white women. Maybe this was because there were few blacks living in the city, but Fanon himself gave a more interesting possible explanation in his first book, *Black Skin, White Masks*. He described there the neurotic behavior pattern of a black man attempting to become white through love of a white woman.

Fanon's life seemed to have four stages: a conventional bourgeois youth; an introspective period during which he realized the extent of his own neuroses as he prepared to become a psychiatrist; a revolutionary, cathartic break with the past; and a more definite African revolutionary ending. In his last year of medical school, when he had chosen a career in psychiatry, he was still divided between a straight academic approach to the field and a cultural historical approach. His 1951 medical dissertation hints at the indecision. The subject is fairly conventional—a study of the psychic difficulties of those suffering from a neurological disease known as the "Freidreich syndrome"—but Fanon begins the essay with a quote from Nietzsche: "I dedicate myself to living beings, not to introspective mental processes."

Fanon's medical residency was unconventional. After a year in Martinique working on *Black Skin, White Masks*, he went to the psychiatric division of a French hospital at Blida-Joinville in Algeria. Josie Fanon says that he chose North Africa because of the increasing revolutionary pressures there; he had already decided that Martinique did not have suitable conditions for the growth of a radical political movement. There is nothing in Fanon's life, at this point, however, that would have indicated his readiness to join a revolution. The book that he had just published was a poetic, philosophical tract rather than a revolutionary proclamation. It seems quite possible that he became convinced of the violent cure necessary for colonial neuroses only after his arrival in North Africa. His trip across the Mediterranean was a blow at the conventional, middle-class society that he was coming to hate; but



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there is no reason to believe that he considered the journey as a final departure from that world.

Soon, though, his psychiatric ward became a recuperation area for very sane injured nationalist warriors. It was enough for the FLN soldiers to fake temporary insanity as long as Fanon cooperated in his official reports. Even though it was a hellish life for a doctor, he remained there for two years and became an important means of support for the FLN in that area. By 1956 the authorities in the hospital and in the town were suspicious of the black psychiatrist. He was being watched closely and finally had to resign and return to France as quickly as possible. But he could not stand to remain in the metropolitan territory, and so he joined the FLN's "Provisional Algerian Government" which had been set up in Tunisia.

Fanon began to write for *El Moudjahid,* the official newspaper of the FLN published in Tunis. Completely engrossed in the new life, all of his past psychic insecurity gave way to a ferocious burst of revolutionary journalism. *El Moudjahid*, appearing in French and Arabic editions, suddenly became an important journal. Before 1957 it was only a tally sheet of the glories of the nationalist war effort—a description of hundreds of feats of bravery by Moslem soldiers. With Fanon as an editor, the paper began to deal with revolutionary theory and to attempt to link the struggle in Algeria with other happenings in the Third World. Fanon and *El Moudjahid* emphasized that the nationalist war was the beginning phase of a larger movement, that independence had to be the precursor of a democratic and social revolution, that the independent states of the Third World could not afford to mimic Western capitalist ways of life. Algeria was economically and socially part of the "Maghreb"—the half-moon shaped area of North Africa including Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. "It is with the coming of our independence," *El Moudjahid* said in December 1957, "that a Maghreb exploited for the needs of a colonial strategy will give way to a unified and strong Maghreb capable of promoting the development of its own natural resources in the primary interest of the North African people."

This was one of Fanon's constant themes, perhaps his most



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important contribution to an African ideology. The concepts involved are quite simple, yet he stressed them with an urgency which has since been vindicated by the disasters of the civil war in Nigeria and the military coups in Algeria, Mali, and other newly independent nations. Fanon emphasized that the national boundaries in North Africa and Black Africa are artificial: they were the work of the Europeans competing to occupy overseas territories in the nineteenth century. The boundaries in no way reflected tribal differences in Africa or economic and social factors anywhere in the continent. Africa partitioned into small competing units was one of the legacies of imperialism: destructive, petty, national rivalries were Europe's gift to the Third World.

Fanon spent the last part of his short life explaining the fundamental unities within all of the underdeveloped areas of the world, describing that which should hold together Asians, Africans, and South Americans, setting forth the common goals of the Third World faced with the more subtle tactics of Western neo-imperialism.

Certain of Fanon's articles on this subject are collected in *Toward the African Revolution*; other ideas of his are repeated in *The Wretched of the Earth*; still more on the subject appeared in *El Moudjahid*. After 1957 there are no names of editors on the masthead of this paper, and none of the articles are signed; it is edited and published in a collective spirit. But there is a style of writing, Fanon's, which dominates the paper; one can tell from reading an issue when Fanon is away from Tunis and not writing. After his death in 1962 the paper deteriorated. Today it has many more photographs, there is advertising, it is printed on better paper, it pays lip service to revolution—but actually it is more concerned with the war against Israel. Above all, *El Moudjahid* has become extremely boring. Fanon's newspaper was world-ranging, angry, impatient, original, occasionally brilliant, always alive.

Fanon attended all the Pan-African conferences after 1956: the Black Writers and Artists Congress that year; a conference on political unity in Accra; other meetings, up until his last illness, in Conakry, Addis Ababa, Monrovia, and Mali. *El Moudjahid* gave full coverage to each congress and, in a series



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of articles, traced the movement for Third World unity back to the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in April 1955.

Though the newspaper was edited in Tunis, Fanon frequently travelled into Algeria to inspect the Revolution personally; on one such trip a mine exploded under his jeep, leaving him with a severe leg wound. Another time, right-wing terrorists in Italy (perhaps financed by the French secret service) attempted to assassinate him during a Black Writers Conference.

Fanon was particularly suspicious of the gentle decolonization eventually practiced by France and Britain, the new spirit of "close cooperation" between the former colonies and the mother countries. He considered the French Community and the British Commonwealth as forms of neo-imperialism. The leaders of the Third World opposing violent political change were Fanon's worst enemies: he could never mention the name of Houphoüet-Boigny, the moderate Ivory Coast leader who had served in several French cabinets, without affixing the label "traitor" and he always contrasted him with Nkrumah of Ghana and Touré of Guinea. The Common Market was for Fanon one of the most dangerous of the West's neo-imperialist maneuvers. France had succeeded in making some of her former African colonies Associate Members of the Market, and Fanon claimed that these countries were being used by France to compensate for her own economic weakness. That is, France was receiving certain economic concessions from the other European powers in the Market in return for allowing them to join in the exploitation of her old colonies. Fanon thought that France alone lacked the strength to keep control over these territories in Africa, so it was allying with the rest of Europe to improve its chances for continuing to take wealth from the lands to the south of the Mediterranean. "French colonialism, changing into neo-colonialism," *El Moudjahid* stated, "must become 'European' to survive. . . . In displaying the mineral wealth of Black Africa to the English and the Germans, France hopes to establish a Euro-African Community which will be strong enough to protect her own interests there."

Although Fanon admitted the existence of racial tensions among the pre-European peoples of Africa, he felt that the new economic warfare necessitated the negation of all such



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prejudices: North Africa had to unite with Black Africa to preserve its own independence from Europe. Fanon always tried to reveal the common political and economic goals of the lighter-skinned Moslems and the black peoples to the south. In an article tracing the development of nationalist movements in the Sudan, Senegal, Guinea, the French Congo, and Chad, *El Moudjahid* concluded: "More and more the effects of the Algerian Revolution in Black Africa become noticeable. More and more a community of interests develops between the peoples living north and south of the Sahara." The Sahara, it added, "far from what is commonly accepted, has always been, through history, a crossroads and passageway for commercial and cultural exchanges." Fanon wanted to add another feature to the desert's history: he hoped to make it into an invasion route from south to north, thus taking on the task of trying to open a new front in the war against the French in Algeria. After 1958 he made several trips to Mali and neighboring states, trying to arrange for African volunteers to pass through Mali into the desert to aid the Algerian nationalist forces.

His failure in the southern project again emphasizes a feature of African history that Fanon worked to negate: the antagonisms of varying intensity between the Moslems and the older black inhabitants of the continent. It is a complicated situation: on the one hand, when the Moslems invaded Africa over a thousand years ago they destroyed indigenous African cultures and became ruthless slave traders; on the other hand, Moslems and blacks often worked together to build impressive states south of the Sahara before the Europeans intruded into the area.

Perhaps the present-day prejudices in North Africa are an attitude assimilated from the French colonizers; in any case, there is evidence that even Fanon felt hostility within the Algerian Revolution. Despite the fact that he did so much to clarify the movement's ideology, despite the fact that he was always the FLN's delegate to conferences in Black Africa, and that he took on the difficult task of trying to open a southern front in the war, Fanon never had a permanent position within the FLN. He had some close friends in the movement—Mohammed Yazid and Ben Bella, to name two—but increasingly



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toward the end of his life Fanon turned his attention to the countries to the south. He had once said, "It is not possible for an Algerian to be really Algerian if he does not feel, in his depths, the horrible drama of what goes on daily in Rhodesia and Angola." If this was true, then there were few real Algerians: the rank and file of the Revolution, as well as its military leadership, hardly knew of the existence of Rhodesia. Fanon himself was never an honored member of the Revolution until after his death.

His colleagues on the staff of *El Moudjahid,* however, had the deepest respect for Fanon; and on December 21, 1962, the unpretentious notice in the paper was in the style that he would have approved:

FRANTZ FANON, OUR BROTHER

Up until his last hour, Brother Frantz Fanon continued his role as a revolutionary intellectual. His death is a terrible loss for the entire anti-colonialist movement.

He died just as victory was nearing for the nationalists; but with independence the fissures in the Revolution opened wide and during the ensuing power struggle *El Moudjahid* was the first victim. The paper appeared irregularly in 1962, and most of its news and analysis were attempts to justify coups within the new state. In August of the first year of independence a small masthead appeared on page two with the name of an editor-in-chief; the cooperative venture had ended; the radical journalists' community was being stratified into levels of bureaucratic power; the paper was to be run by allies of those with the most strength in the government; the old dictatorship of the intellect was dead. It would have been valuable to be able to follow Fanon through the crises of a declining revolution; his absence speeded the collapse of the progressive forces.

In tribute to Fanon, his friend Aimé Césaire, also an unusually talented black writer from Martinique, said:

His violence, paradoxically, was that of the non-violent—I mean the violence of justice, of purity, of non-compromise. . . . He didn't just adhere to a cause, he gave himself to it. Entirely. Without reservation, without hesitations. It was not sufficient for him to note the condition of the Algerian people; he had to join



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the oppressed, humiliated, tortured, beaten Algerians. He became Algerian. Lived Algerian. Fought Algerian. Died Algerian.

Césaire skillfully portrayed Fanon's spirit and dedication, but the tribute is less accurate as to his politics. Fanon became Algerian, lived Algerian—but died African. Even when his Russian doctors insisted that he go to the United States for treatment of his cancer, he had a horror of entering what he referred to as "the nation of lynchers," and in an American hospital he had a wild fear that his doctors were killing him out of racial malice. Fanon's last weeks were spent in empathy for the black "colonial" subjects within America.

## REVOLUTIONARY THEORIES

By Peter Worsley

In 1960, I attended the All-Africa People's Congress in Accra, Ghana. The proceedings consisted mainly of speeches by leaders of African nationalism from all over the continent, few of whom said anything notable. When, therefore, the representative of the Algerian Revolutionary Provisional Government, their Ambassador to Ghana, stood up to speak I prepared myself for an address by a diplomat—not usually an experience to set the pulses racing. I found myself electrified by a contribution that was remarkable not only for its analytical power, but delivered, too, with a passion and brilliance that is all too rare. I discovered that the Ambassador was a man named Frantz Fanon. At one point during his talk he appeared almost

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to break down. I asked him afterwards what had happened. He replied that he had suddenly felt emotionally overcome at the thought that he had to stand there, before the assembled representatives of African nationalist movements, to try and persuade them that the Algerian cause was important, at a time when men were dying and being tortured in his country for a cause whose justice ought to command automatic support from rational and progressive human beings.

It is this special blend of intellect and passion that stamps Fanon's work as the product of a very unique and powerful mind. And the context in which I heard him talk reflects, too, the fact that though his life was dedicated to the Algerian Revolution, he was also concerned with the general theory and practice of revolution in the Third World as a whole.

The components of Fanon's work closely reflect his personal experience. He was born in Martinique, a French colonial subject. He was faced, therefore, with all the problems of identity that confronted those who were part of the professional and intellectual elite in colonial society: are they West Indians, are they Frenchmen, or are they men of two worlds, torn or lost between both? These problems were peculiarly painful for intellectuals in *French* colonies, because of the French policy of turning selected individuals away from their indigenous cultural milieux and converting them into *évolués*—i.e., colored Frenchmen. This policy reposed, as the word *évolué* indicates, on the simple evolutionist-racist assumption that the indigenous cultures were primitive and backward, and that progress consisted in becoming more and more like the white man, whose culture was the highest pinnacle of human evolution. It is some measure of the impact made by the fact of the newly independent countries of the Third World, and by the experience of the Soviet Union, China, and Cuba, that it is really no longer seriously possible to assume that "Western" culture is culture *tout court*. It is Frantz Fanon perhaps more than anyone else who has said this most forcibly and clearly in theoretical terms.

It was almost inevitable that the redefinition of identity for colonial man should have been best articulated by one who was not only from the *French* colonies but from the French colonies



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in the New World. For Fanon stood in a tradition that had been long in the making. Activistic declarations by blacks in the New World of the value of indigenous African and Caribbean cultures, the reassertion of continuities between Africa and the West Indies, and the emergence of a new pride in being black, plus the concomitant growth of revolt against slavish adulation of things European, long antedate modern *African* nationalism. Nor were they simply an intellectual product, since the emergence of a predominantly literary culture embodying these themes was itself part of a process of political renaissance which had begun as early as the great revolution of Toussaint L'Ouverture against Napoleon in Haiti. It was in post-independence Haiti, therefore, that the predecessors of modern *négritude* emerged—an Anténor Firmin, a Hannibal Price. Again, at the end of the nineteenth century, the second major revolution in the West Indies, that of the Cuban War of Independence, generated a literary and intellectual culture which was an integral part of the political awakening, in the form, for example, of the anti-slavery novels of the nineteenth century, culminating in that apotheosis of Cuban revolutionary literature, the work of José Martí.*[1]

The tension between the revolt of color and the revolt of class permeates the literature of the Afro-Cubanists of the 1920's, the revolutionary Caribbean poets of the 1930's, and the work of Frantz Fanon himself. It is never clearly resolved. Fanon himself made his connection with this stream of thought, however, only *after* his arrival in Paris, and particularly under the impact of his experiences in Algeria itself. Before this, he had adopted an "assimilationist" standpoint.[2] Yet the connection was eventually made, and the emotionality and the poetic force of Fanon's writing is a continuation of this literature of black revolution, which he often cites. Though a scientist whose professional experience informs his whole thinking, his style of writing appeals to the total "sensibility." Highly diagnostic, it is never merely clinical. It is also denunciatory and prophetic. It is political thought and feeling about the total human condition distilled into poetic prose.

* Numbered notes will be found at the end of the article.



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Fanon's early writings, then, were inevitably primarily concerned with the validity and autonomy of black cultures, with the decolonization of the personality, and with the concomitant discovery of contempt for the oppressive colonialist culture of the white man. *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* is his major work on this theme.[3] But his ideas do go beyond *négritude*: for him, the enemy is colonialist racism, not the white man.

Here, however, I shall not discuss Fanon's ideas about the colonization of the personality, or his psychiatric writing, even though these were such key parts of his thinking and sources of his politics. Rather, I shall deal with the political ideas themselves: in particular his ideas concerning the role of revolutionary violence, and his general conception of the revolutionary process in the world as a whole.

Violence is a subject surrounded with more than a little double-think and hypocrisy. It is often thought of as simply a pathological phenomenon. Yet, paradoxically, even most orthodox political theories insist that in the last analysis ruling elites depend upon force—even if they usually try to buttress their power by persuading those they rule that they have a legitimate *right* to rule. Power thus derives from control over various kinds of resources, notably military resources, economic resources, and the means of informing men's minds. But some regimes do depend primarily upon tanks, and as we look at the world today it seems, increasingly, that when legitimacy is exhausted—as in Greece, Nigeria, Peru, or Pakistan—the resort to naked force is only too swift.

In colonial countries after the Second World War, too, as nationalist challenges mounted and spread, force was a common automatic response. Few today remember the incredible slaughter in Madagascar in 1947, the successive "police actions" in which the Dutch attempted to strangle the Indonesian Revolution, or the massacre of 45,000 Algerians at Sétif in 1944. In some of these countries, this was enough to suppress revolutions temporarily; in others, the revolution grew. In yet others, however, other tactics were resorted to: dependent independent countries were created. Peaceful transfers of power did occur after the Second World War in India and Ceylon, for example, without



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the stimulus of revolution, since the opportunity cost otherwise would have been the cost of holding down a sub-continent. But straightforward and bloody imperialist restoration was attempted, for example, in Algeria and Indo-China. It is against this background that we must examine Fanon's views on violence.

Violence, he insists, is at first either simply self-defense or the explosion of pent-up fury and frustration which expresses itself in murder. Its political expression is the *jacquerie* or the riot of the city mob. *Jacqueries* are outbursts of peasant violence which normally end with the pacification (i.e. slaughter) of the peasantry by the state.

The great social transformation of the nineteenth century, it might be said, was the political mobilization of the working class in the industrialized capitalist countries. The great social transformation of the twentieth century, by contrast, has been the revolutionary mobilization of the peasantry. The peasant, mocked and cheated for millennia, became the most revolutionary force in the world.

Revolutionary struggle involves using many kinds of resources, strategies, and tactics. It does not simply mean bloodshed at the barricades. The aimless, "expressive" violence of the *jacquerie* is anathema to the disciplined and organized revolutionary movement. So is individual or random resort to violence. There are, however, two exceptions:

(1) The use of terror against key figures: a Tsar, or a village headman in Vietnam, for this is both symbolic of, and destructive of, enemy morale and organization.

(2) Deliberately random terror—the transformation of life into something completely unpredictable; the demonstration—by bombing cafés or rocketing cities—that no one can retire from the struggle into some private oasis of security, that no ruling group can protect you, and that the revolutionaries have the power and determination to smash the social order. But *purely* "expressive" violence is pointless, and usually ineffective. It simply brings down collective punishment and superior force upon those least able to defend themselves.

When utilized as part of a rationally planned collective revolutionary struggle, violence is given social direction. In the



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process it produces new men, no longer men who react wildly against colonial control by ad hoc, individual, or localized outbreaks of disorganized aggression, but men who "stand up" with arms in their hand, and thereby direct the collective destructiveness of organized violence into the positive channel of revolution.

One must emphasize that it is not easy to turn men, especially illiterate peasants, into revolutionary fighters. The readiness to take up arms is something that the revolutionary organization has to create, for men are scared when confronted with overwhelming power, and repression does not automatically generate resistance. It also generates hopelessness, compromise, and avoidance. Repressive violence is, of course, a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for the emergence of revolutionary counter-violence. That is why the revolts in Mozambique and Angola today overshadow the guerrilla movements in Rhodesia and South Africa. With his back to the wall, the knife at his throat (or, more precisely, Fanon says, the electrodes at his genitals) the native becomes a man, and can no longer afford random, fantastic, purely individual or purely destructive outlets for his repressed aggression. This situation of fundamental choice, therefore, necessarily involves turning one's back on any attempt simply to survive, or to live by one's wits. "You can no longer," Fanon remarks, "be a *fellah,* a pimp, or an alcoholic as before." Hence, he claims, violence often occurs as a collective act in which each individual performs "irrevocable actions" as part of a *group.* In Mau Mau attacks, he says, commonly "each person struck the victim, and was thus personally responsible for the death of that victim." Violence of this kind is thus a *social* violence, and the transformations of personality entailed are *social* transformations. Hence, also, the common phenomenon of the puritanism of revolutionaries and the remarkable individual manifestations of this kind of revolutionary transformation of the personality, evinced in such autobiographies as that of Malcolm X, who changed—from being a pimp, hustler, lindy-hopper, and zoot-suiter, a predator upon white women who was ashamed of his crinkly Negro hair—as a result of his conversion, firstly, to messianic religious black nationalism and later to a more universalistic revolutionary Islam,



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so seriously threatening that it brought him a violent death.[4]

Thus, for Fanon, violence is initially the wickedness of the animal that occasionally bites back when harassed and cornered once too often. But it becomes transformed into a means of social renewal when harnessed to revolutionary ends. It is the only mode of securing justice in that kind of society where, as he remarks, "there has not yet been a single Frenchman indicted before a French court of justice for the murder of an Algerian." Yet in the popular press for the intelligentsia, Fanon is commonly spoken of as an "apostle of violence," one who elevates violence into a mystique as an end in itself. This is a travesty of Fanon. For him, violence is no absolute: its significance is relative and situationally determined. It is legitimate, indeed sacred, where it is used instrumentally as *the means of revolution,* and through revolution leads to the beginning of a higher social order and the development of new human potential. But one must emphasize that he looks to the transcending of violence, and to its replacement by rational, collective decision-making in a way that, far from celebrating violence as an absolute—as fascism did—sees it as a temporary phenomenon to be displaced by higher forms of social organization in a liberated society.

Fanon's view of violence, then, is no cult of destruction. Indeed, if he is to be accused of anything, it is not *realpolitik* at all but super-idealism! For in the liberated Algeria that he assumed would be an extension of the revolutionary underground cell, where "the citizens should be able to speak, to express themselves . . . [where] the branch meeting and the committee meeting are liturgical acts," the person who actually won out was not Fanon's colleague, Ben Bella, but the army which had spent the war outside Algeria in the shape of Boumedienne's Islamic-chauvinistic-authoritarian military regime.

Far from celebrating violence as an absolute, Fanon insists that "hatred is not a program." He also rejects, despite those who misrepresent him, *any* form of racialism, not just white racialism. "Exploitation," he writes, "can wear a black face, or an Arab one," and he points to the support given to the nationalist cause by *some* whites, even settlers and soldiers. At this point, the settler, he says, "is no longer simply someone to be killed." The white man's humanity, too, becomes realized as he



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decolonizes *himself* by aligning himself politically with the revolution. At this stage in the struggle, "many members of the mass of colonialists reveal themselves to be much, much nearer to the national struggle than certain sons of the nation. The barriers of blood and race-prejudice are broken down on both sides. In the same way, not every Negro or Muslim is issued automatically with a hallmark of genuineness. . . ." Consciousness thus changes; it is not an absolute racial attribute but a political achievement, part of a process of revolution.

Let us turn now to Fanon's general conception of the world-revolutionary process. National independence is not the end of the road for him. If it is not accompanied by social transformation, all that happens is the installation of a national bourgeoisie, whose "nationalism" simply consists of substituting themselves in office, not in the total break-up and replacement of the system of government as part of a wider social revolution. This kind of nationalism is devoid both of positive social content internally, and devoid, too, of any wider external content, since it leads to the failure of regional, continental, or wider cooperation, and the consequent re-emergence of chauvinistic boundary disputes, tribalism, and federalism. (For Fanon, of course, the only valid political aggregations wider than the nation are the continental unity of Africa and the constellation of the non-aligned, underdeveloped countries.)

This bourgeoisie is not a transformatory bourgeoisie economically, either: it does not create modern capitalism, because it is dependent on the former imperialist powers for markets, loans, etc. It is a bourgeoisie "in spirit only," an underdeveloped bourgeoisie, a mere intermediary heading up a country indirectly still ruled by the former colonial power. The new bourgeois caste, unable and unmotivated to transform society, becomes increasingly exploitative, intent primarily on securing its own privileges, insensitive to popular misery, and entertaining its masters not only corporately by acting as "the Western bourgeoisie's agent," but also personally by turning the ex-colonies into tourist haunts and "brothels of Europe." Characteristically, it establishes the single party as its instrument of political dictatorship. It thus has political power, but no serious economic



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power. It is "good for nothing." Its only perspective on the future is that of continuing as "Europe's petty farmers specializing in primary products." The takeover of the settlers' farms is the only major change; but this kind of "nationalization . . . simply means the transfer into native hands of those unfair advantages which are a legacy of the colonial period." This "national bourgeoisie" thus includes no finance-capitalists, no industrial magnates; it is a bourgeoisie of petty or comprador businessmen, not captains of industry, and its most enlightened elements—the university and merchant classes—are, he says, small in number, concentrated in the capital, and confined to business, agriculture, and the liberal professions.

In underdeveloped countries, then, there exists no true bourgeoisie, capable of creating "the conditions necessary for the development of a large-scale proletariat, to mechanize agriculture and finally to make possible the existence of an authentic national culture." This means that since national-capitalist development cannot occur, the colonial-capitalist pattern of the economy continues. It means, too, that appropriate revolutionary strategies must be very different from those pursued in developed countries.

The mass *party,* under such conditions, becomes either simply a nostalgic purveyor of mythical solidarity and purely symbolic glory, increasingly focused on the heroic past (the independence struggle), its only relationship to the people that of turning them out on mass "spontaneous" street demonstrations and rallies and of ensuring that they toe the party line, whilst the *state* becomes an instrument of repression and for the multiplication of offices, privileges, and pelf for the elite. The critical, democratic, participatory life of the party branch ceases: the traffic is now one-way—from the top downward.

This description, it seems to me, is one which most social scientists would find compelling enough, though, unlike Fanon, they would never express it in quite such forthright language. (And they would certainly be much more nervous about saying such things about their own countries.) Fewer of them—though they are more numerous than once they were—would accept the next step in Fanon's argument: that revolution is the only solution.



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The key sources of revolutionary change, for Fanon, are the peasantry and the lumpenproletariat—though for either class to struggle with success they must unite with "urban intellectuals," a small number of whom "go to the people" in the countryside and begin to live and work among them. The revolutionary struggle itself creates the political party. (Here the resemblance to Debray is close.)

By contrast, bourgeois politics is something that takes place in the capital; the peasantry are treated as "incapable of governing themselves"; the bourgeoisie shun the country districts as if they were plague zones; and the rural poor themselves also flock to the towns. This kind of party is thus an imitation of urban European politics, and has no organic relationship to the culture of the society. The strategy for the revolutionaries is the antithesis of this: to root themselves in the rural areas as equals, not superiors; to engage in armed struggle; and to establish a second base among the lumpenproletariat. The theory of rural guerrilla warfare is so familiar that I shall not discuss it here. Suffice it to draw attention to one point often forgotten: that the guerrillas cannot even find their way about a countryside with which they are quite unfamiliar unless the local peasants guide them. The blind wanderings of Guevara's men in Bolivia are eloquent testimony.

Fanon's stress on the revolutionary potential of the lumpenproletariat, however, is much more unfamiliar and provocative; to my knowledge, he is the only important contemporary thinker who has seriously advocated this.* Yet if one considers the massive and rapid growth of the cities of the Third World, the ever-swelling exodus of the peasants to the cities—to São Paulo, Johannesburg, Saigon, Cairo, Nairobi, Bangkok, or Manila—and the appalling conditions under which these new urban populations live in the *favelas, barriadas, bidonvilles,* shanty towns, or whaever the local name is for the universal phenomenon of life in encampments made of cardboard, flattened petrol tins, and old packing cases, one must surely challenge the highly insulting and analytically unilluminating Marxist

* The notion that the lumpenproletariat constituted a potential revolutionary force, and the proletariat a bureaucratized non-revolutionary class, is, of course, to be found in anarchist thinking, e.g., in Bakunin.



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term lumpenproletariat, and begin to treat seriously both the human beings this pejorative epithet purports to describe and Fanon's theories about them.

There seems to be a theory abroad that peasants are "natural" revolutionaries. Such a theory has one singular property: it does not explain most of recorded human history. Peasants have, however, *become* revolutionary in this century, when provided with ideology, leadership, and organization. Once this is done, they become recruitable and organizable, and begin to produce their own leaders and cadres. There seems no good reason at all why, given good will and hard work, the urban poor should not be equally effective revolutionary material, whatever their present condition. But one of the major factors keeping the urban lumpenproletariat depoliticized is the very theory that they *are* a lumpenproletariat. Revolutionary theory is thus one of the major reasons why that potentially revolutionary category remains on the sidelines of history. Ruling elites, for once, have cause to be grateful to Karl Marx; for treating people as "lumpens," in fact, ensures that they will be. Because of these traditionalistic revolutionary views, Marxists have not attempted to organize this section of the urban poor; they have spent much effort, instead, on working amongst the skilled and established industrial proletariat, a *relatively* privileged and secure segment of the working class.

One of the few revolutions that did attempt to do so was the Algerian, and, though it has never yet been properly studied, the urban revolution—in Algiers in particular—was undoubtedly a quite vital component of the national struggle, an indispensable complement to the fighting in the *bled*. In the process, tens of thousands of the volatile lower depths of the city slum population were transformed from being an anarchic, hopeless, depoliticized, mass into a reservoir for the revolution. That they were crushed by Massu's paratroopers is irrelevant to the argument, for the revolution *as a whole,* i.e., town *and* country, failed to secure a military victory.* It did, however, win politically, for Algeria did secure her independence.

* Fanon himself remarks that the revolutionaries do not expect to *win* militarily, but rather to wear down the enemy, until he comes to realize that the cost of continuing is too high, since the price is the



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A better general label for this population of the lower depths of the cities, would perhaps be "the non-working classes," for there is little danger of confusing them with those other non-working classes, the international jet-set playboy fraternity. I emphasize the volatility of these people, which organizers of the "city mob," as Hobsbawm calls it,[5] have realized only too clearly throughout history. They are volatile because they lack stability in all dimensions of their lives. I am not here resuscitating the tired and discredited sociological notions about "social disorganization" and "social pathology," so prevalent in the 1920's. We all know today that even this kind of slum life can be highly structured at a primary-group level, and, indeed, that such groups are often articulated to wider social institutions, e.g., to political parties (usually via patronage and similar links), to criminal sub-cultures (gangster empires, etc.), to churches, and so on. The classic study here is William Foot Whyte's *Street Corner Society,* which, significantly, is a study, not of a Third World city, but an Italian slum district of Boston, in the heartland of the most economically developed nation in history. One should note—because it is the kind of fact entirely excluded from Fanon's interpretation—that this kind of social stratum is to be found in advanced capitalist societies as well as in underdeveloped ones. Nor are they necessarily only colored people. All the major characteristics of the life of this sub-proletariat are well documented for the so-called "lower classes," below the "working classes," of *whites* in Britain and the United States.[6]

Hitherto, of course, they have been most notable when they have intervened in history as a reactionary force, under "Church and King" and similar slogans, as Fanon himself notes. They are also not very "nice" people; they include many

"prolonged establishment of large forces of occupation." His own self-interest therefore demands the ending of the struggle. Thus Portugal devotes some 40 percent of her budget to the counterrevolutionary wars in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea. One should note that Fanon is very conscious of the value of international support, but never speaks at any point of any other *kind* of international support than that of the other countries of the Third World and the socialist countries. And about the latter he has his reservations. Support from within capitalist countries he discounts as insignificant.



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socially quite undesirable elements who want no part of respectable values or virtues. Non-respectability, insecurity, and instability are their normal conditions of life, and obtain in all dimensions of their lives. They have no steady jobs: they live from hand to mouth, sell a few stolen goods, buy farm products from relatives and resell them so as to "make" a hundredth part of a penny profit. Sol Tax called them, for Guatemala, "penny capitalists."[7] Sometimes they get brief jobs as coolies; sometimes they steal. Their domestic and marital life is similar: a set of disconnected episodes rather than a continuous series of unfolding successive phases in the normal developmental sequence of family life. For the lower depths, marriage itself is abnormal: "faithful concubinage," and fatherless, matricentral families are the norm. Residentially, the family has no home, only a temporary dwelling place; they live in shanty towns made of packing cases, not in houses, not even in slum houses. They live by their wits; they include the "pimps, the hooligans, the unemployed and the petty criminals . . . , the prostitutes . . . and the maids who are paid two pounds a month, all the helpless dregs of humanity, all who turn in circles between suicide and madness. . . ." It is within this mass of humanity, Fanon believes, "that the rebellion will find its urban spearhead . . . [This] horde of starving men . . . constitutes one of the most spontaneous and the most radically revolutionary forces of a colonized people." Their revolutionary potential he sees as quite equal to that of peasants who for centuries have put up, fatalistically and resignedly, with their miserable conditions. Like the peasants, he believes that, given organization and leadership, the urban poor can also become a revolutionary force. As yet, however, no one has tried.

It is a great mistake, moreover, to think of them statically, as constituting a separate category—lumpenproletarians—sharply marked off from the peasants as if they were really a fixed and consolidated social class, firstly, because they are ex-peasants, anyhow, and secondly, because they are essentially *people in process*. They are *becoming* townsmen—eventually, they hope, a part of the settled, employed urban working-class population. But they are a long way from being absorbed and accepted into urban society. They are outcasts, marginal men, travelers be-



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tween two social worlds, occupants of a limbo to which most of us would think hell preferable, but which for them represents a great improvement in many respects upon the village life they have abandoned. For they are as much *drawn* to town as they are driven. They are by no means always in town because they have lost their land. If not yet fully townsmen, they are also not yet totally divested of their rural integument. When they can, they return home for visits; many of their key social values are those of rural society; they spend their time, and create many of their new urban associations (where they have any at all), with fellow slum-dwellers with similar rural backgrounds—people from the same province, tribe, or village. The persisting links with the village are not only sentimental, however, for they often support the village by repatriating money where they can, and in turn may flee for sanctuary back to the countryside in times of dire distress, or if they totally fail in the city. But few return permanently, and though they talk about the village as "home," even after decades in the cities and towns, it is a nostalgic reflex more often than reality, for the truth is that home is now this world of flattened petrol tins and pieces of cardboard. And their expectations are indeed *rising,* for their reference points are no longer solely the kinds of wealth and status traditional in village society, but what they see their more fortunate fellows have achieved, and even the lives which the white men, or the new elites which have displaced the white men, are living.

Fanon describes them as "that fraction of the peasant population which is blocked on the outer fringes of the urban centers." Hence, it is through them, he believes, that rural rebellion will filter into the towns. Here, then, is no simple counterposing of a "rural" versus an "urban" strategy. Rather it is a conception of revolutionary strategy adapted to the empirical situation within these differing countries. Some of them are over 95 percent peasant societies. In these, the peasant strategy recommends itself. Others, however, are considerably urbanized: Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, and Uruguay all have 40 percent or more of their population in towns and cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants. They are often quite different cities from those in industrial societies, however; merely to record their



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size obscures these qualitative differences. And the functions and influence of the larger, "primate" cities, the centers of government, trade, and what industry there is, are incapable of absorbing into productive employment the growing migrant population.

It is interesting that the mobilization of the urban poor was achieved in Algeria, particularly in the capital city. But it is also interesting that this strategy has found a ready reception, not in other Third World countries, but amongst the blacks of the United States, for whom a peasant-based strategy would scarcely be of much relevance. Fanon's books sell in thousands in Harlem and the northern cities swollen by immigration from the South.

Thus Fanon does not pose a choice between the countryside and the town in any absolute terms; the relevant strategy is itself a function of the social structure. The peasant strategy —to generalize shamefully—is relevant only for one particular kind of society, underdeveloped agrarian societies. In Africa, the cities and towns are pockets in a sea of peasants; in Latin America, they are 40 percent of that continent's population. In the United States, the urban areas are the decisive centers of population.

If Fanon brings onto the scene a class not normally regarded as revolutionary material—the urban poor—he equally dismisses the one class which classical Marxist theory postulates as the most revolutionary class of all: the urban proletariat. The working classes of the towns, Fanon believes—the skilled workers, the civil servants, those with regular paid employment—are the "most pampered" and "*comparatively* privileged" segment of the poor. Reliance upon them, he insists, is simply a hangover from colonialism, because it is an importation of political ideas borrowed from urbanized and industrialized Europe—where they have not produced successful revolutions either. He therefore rejects this European revolutionary orthodoxy along with other imported orthodoxies.

Hence his views, in this key respect at least, are anathema to Communists of every variety. They reject in particular his belief that "the peasants alone are revolutionary" and his denigration of the classic working class. They accuse him of un-



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derestimating the revolutionary contribution of the urban proletariat, and of ignoring the constant contact and movement to and fro between town and countryside. Thus Nguyen Nghe, a Vietnamese Communist, rebukes him sharply: the urban working class, he writes, is privileged only in one sense—it is best placed to perceive and understand the revolutionary process as a whole. It is, in consequence, best placed also to *direct* the revolution, whatever the actual social composition of the revolutionary armies. The perspective of the revolution, therefore, is "proletarian"—i.e., it derives from classical Marxism, since those who direct the revolution base themselves on Marxism and are thus better able to direct the revolution than intellectuals or peasants. "A purely peasant revolution," he rebukes Fanon, "can only be a *jacquerie* with no future," will be incapable of making the transition to modernized warfare, and will ultimately be doomed to fall under bourgeois influence. Fanon's weakness, he suggests, is that he has not fully emancipated himself from the French existentialism he was exposed to in French colonial intellectual circles and in Paris. Existentialism he describes as a "subjectivist" and individualistic philosophy of an intelligentsia, which, however radical, has been unable to develop both an adequate revolutionary political theory and an effective political movement ever since the Liberation.*

The final sin, for the Communists, is that Fanon is contemptuous of international class solidarity. Certainly, Fanon explicitly writes off Europe. "For a long time now," he writes, "history has been made without the Left in Europe." The re-creation of Man has therefore to be undertaken from the base of the Third World. His tone, it should be noted, is one of sorrow rather than anger. The touch of really strident anti-Europeanism, indeed, comes not from Fanon, for whom one of the greatest crimes of the new bourgeois caste in newly independent countries was that they installed an inverted version of white racism, but in Jean-Paul Sartre's hysterical perversion

* Nguyen Nghe, "Frantz Fanon et les Problèmes de L'Indépendance," *La Pensée,* No. 107, February 1963, pp. 22-36. He admits that the Vietnamese revolutionary armies are 95 percent peasant in *composition.* Their "proletarian-ness" consists, in this argument, in being led by men committed to a "proletarian" ideology.



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of Fanon's thinking printed as a preface to *The Wretched of the Earth.*

Despite his Delphic style of writing at this point in his argument, what is quite clear is that Fanon wished to steer clear of communism in any of its institutionalized state-forms, and capitalism likewise, and looked to the creation of a Third-World, autonomous, humanistic society independent of both. Yet despite his castigation of the advanced countries, which he relegated to the ashcan of history, he cannot bring himself to ignore Europe. He does *not* speak solely to his fellows in the Third World at all. Far from duplicating his message on cheap paper, writing it in Arabic, Swahili, Hindustani, or Malay, and distributing it to the peasantry of the world's countryside, he wrote it in French and published it in Paris. He has had some influence upon some activist revolutionary circles in the Third World, of course. But it is ironic that his influence upon revolutionary practice has perhaps been more evident outside the Third World altogether: in Paris, Berlin, and New York; for the revival of urban riot and insurrectionism in Europe and the United States has had considerable ideological inspiration from Fanon's writings. Basically, what his readers have responded to in his writing is his insistence that revolutions are made by having revolutions—i.e., by using direct, including violent, action. They have also taken from Fanon the notion—despite his prime emphasis on the peasantry—that this is something that can happen in cities as well as in villages.

As for his dream of the Third World as a coherent force, and the launching-pad for the revolutionary transformation of world society, it daily appears to be receding into the distance, as the world becomes ever more sharply divided between a set of revolutionary centers with their attached followings—China and Cuba being the principal ones—which, whatever their differences, are all linked by subscription to some variety of Marxism, and on the other side, a set of non-revolutionary states which increasingly throw up counterrevolutionary regimes. Much of Fanon's Third World has, in the event, been sucked into one grouping or the other.

What does remain portentous in his analysis, at this level, is the possibility that affluent Communism, in its Soviet form,



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which has already quite clearly consolidated an Empire in Europe, may transmute its policy of "coexistence"—at present still compatible with serious material and moral support for Vietnam and Cuba—into a policy of *cooperation* with capitalism.

I have pointed out elsewhere[8] that Fanon's model of the world revolutionary process substitutes the underdeveloped *countries* of the world as the agency of change, whilst for traditional Marxism, by contrast, it is social *class* which is the crucial agency of change. Yet Lenin also said that the ultimate triumph of world communism was assured because the revolution would triumph among the mass of mankind in the *colonial* world—notably in China and India. It is this theme that one finds in the Chinese notion of the world's cities being surrounded by the world's countryside.*

These complex combinations of non-Communist revolutionism with *various* kinds of Communism, the blending of Communist movements struggling for national independence and revolution with the Communisms institutionalized in the form of states, mean that the whole constellation of forces, revolutionary and counterrevolutionary, cannot be crammed into the Procrustean mold of "Communist" versus "democratic." This conception, which still dominates the typological categories which inform contemporary Western political science, mainly American, are simply archaic ideological reflections of the Cold War in its Russo-American phase, a Manichean view of the world that has not even caught up, because its theoretical categories do not permit it, with the growth of polycentrism in the Communist world.

Neither is the "Third World," as I have spelt out elsewhere,[9] a fixed and unitary concept. The very breakdown of the old Cold War located in Europe and underpinned from North America, has been displaced by a world system in which

* Nguyen Nghe, too, though scornful of the notion of an independent Third World, by no means accepts that the world has become polarized into a simple choice between the United States and the Soviet Union. Nor does he even phrase the alternative as a "Chinese" further option. He insists that the national conditions of each country will determine what kind of revolutionary strategy for the building of a socialist society will be adopted. The relevant strategy is thus national in content —"interior," as he puts it.



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the centers where the crucial confrontations take place are outside Europe altogether. It seems likely that the most decisive conflicts yet to come will occur outside Euro-North America also—not, probably, in Latin America, as is so often assumed, but in Asia, in India and Indonesia, where the bulk of non-Communist mankind lives under regimes whose future is problematic in the extreme.

The Third World is not therefore a separate political system, any more than the Russian or American Empires can be. All are parts of a single world social system. So Third World ideas are no longer confined to the poor countries. They are penetrating right into the heartlands of the developed world themselves, as the old categories prove inadequate in societies where students provide a new kind of revolutionary force, where the "end of ideology" celebrated in the fifties gives way to struggles over civil rights, Vietnam, and the poverty of the "Other America," and where problems of ethnic, not merely class, inequality increasingly manifest themselves not just in the Third World, but in the slums of London, Birmingham, Los Angeles, and New York.* In this context, voices from the Third World are listened to with new attention, and the revolutions in Cuba and Vietnam inspire Europeans. It is because of this that the writings of Frantz Fanon are anything but a separate and local private property of the poor countries, and take on an enhanced significance in the very area that he wrote off as the backwaters of history.

* Again, repression abroad spills over into the home countries, as when Massu's paratroopers turned from Algeria to threaten Paris, or as the degenerating economic situation in the Third World affects the supply of raw materials, the availability of markets, and the balance of payments for the developed countries.

NOTES:

1. On this topic, see G.R. Coulthard's *Race and Colour in Caribbean Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962).
2. See Simone de Beauvoir, *La Force des Choses* (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 610, 619-624 [*Force of Circumstances* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1965)]. Further glimpses of Fanon are obtainable from "Hommages à Frantz Fanon," *Présence Africaine,* XL, 1962, pp. 118-138.



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3. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1952 [*Black Skin, White Masks* (New York: Grove Press, 1967)].
4. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* (New York: Grove Press, 1965). See also Michael Abdul Malik, *From Michael de Freitas to Michael X* (London: Deutsch, 1968).
5. E. J. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (Manchester University Press, 1959), Ch. VII, "The City Mob." See also G. Rudé, *The Crowd in the French Revolution* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959); *Wilkes and Liberty* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962); *The Crowd in History: 1730-1848* (New York: Wiley, 1964).
6. See, e.g., Josephine Klein, *Samples from English Cultures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1965), esp. Vol. I., Chaps. I and II.
7. *Penny Capitalism: A Guatemalan Indian Economy* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, Institute of Social Anthropology, 1953) Publication 16.
8. *The Third World* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1967), second edition, pp. 260-261.
9. *The Third World,* Ch. VII, esp. pp. 284-286.

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Here, a white scoundrel, because he is white, is preferred to an honest and educated black man. . . . Nowhere in the world are the worth and dignity of manhood more exalted in speech and press than they are here, and nowhere is manhood pure and simple more despised than here.

—*Frederick Douglass*

## News From the Pueblo Inquiry

While the crewmen were interrogated by the North Koreans about the Pueblo's mission—and shown films that glorified North Korea—little apparent attempt was made by guards to indoctrinate or "brainwash" them. One of the Pueblo's two Negro crewmen, for example, indicated today that he had received no special treatment.

"They asked me about life of Negroes in the United States, how we lived," said Commissaryman 1st Cl. Harry Lewis, a 32-year-old cook from East Meadow, L. I.

"And what did you tell them?" asked Captain Newsome. "Did you answer truthfully?"

"I told them we were all rich and lived happy," said Commissaryman Lewis, with just a trace of irony in his voice.

—*New York Times, February 25, 1969*



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# MONTHLY REVIEW PRESS SPRING LIST

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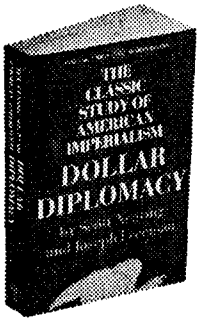


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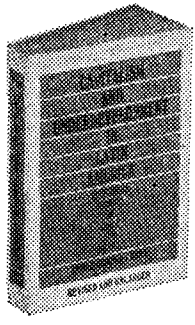

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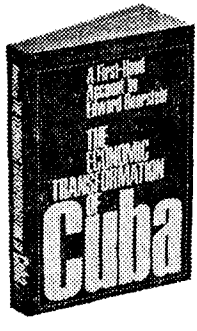


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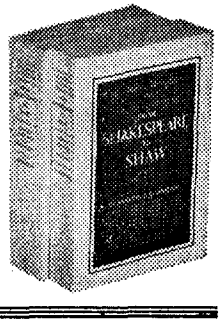

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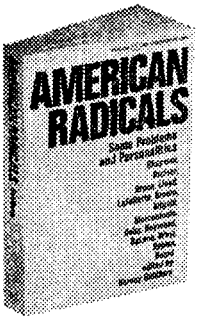


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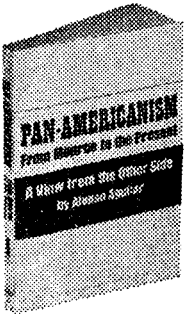
The bulk of this symposium on Debray's theory of Latin American revolution originally appeared as the summer 1968 issue of *Monthly Review.* Four important essays have been added, by Juan Bosch, James Petras, Peter Worsley, and Gordon Lewis. "It is a pleasure to have these criticisms gathered into a book . . . this collection makes a fine, readily assimilated contribution to an understanding of the issues."—*The Kirkus Service.* $1.95/18s

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# REVOLUTION AND THE CUBAN WORKERS

BY JAMES O'CONNOR

*Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class* by Maurice Zeitlin. Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1967; $8.50.

Maurice Zeitlin is a North American sociologist, pamphleteer, and movement activist who studied the Cuban Revolution at first hand in 1961 and 1962. Six years ago he published a short book, *Cuba: Tragedy in Our Hemisphere* (co-authored by Robert Scheer), which remains to this day the best rebuttal of the position set forth in the State Department White Paper of April 1961 (that Fidel Castro deliberately initiated the economic and diplomatic war against the United States) and the best exposure of the hollowness of the original United States government line toward Cuba. In the past eight years, Zeitlin has authored a number of articles and pamphlets on Cuba and Latin America, establishing himself as one of the leading critics of this country's Cuba policy, as well as a leading agitator for a change in that policy.

Most of the materials in Zeitlin's new book, *Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class,* were drawn from his Ph.D. dissertation and are the result of over 200 interviews with a "randomly selected national sample" of Cuban industrial workers. With the aid of Comandante Guevara, then Cuba's Minister of

James O'Connor teaches economics at San Jose State College and has written extensively on revolutionary Cuba.



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Industry, and the cooperation of nearly all of the workers chosen to be interviewed, Zeitlin has compiled a comprehensive index of working class attitudes toward the Revolution in the summer of 1962.

The kinds of questions Zeitlin asked Cuban workers and the responses he received were guided by his desire to learn what led some workers and not others to support the Revolution and why some workers supported the Revolution more actively than others. In his own words, "the principal task of our study . . . has been to identify such 'fractions' or 'categories' of the working class in Cuba (which in Michel's words have 'detached themselves from the great army of labor and made common cause with the bourgeoisie') and to observe whether or not and in what manner they have led to their members' differential political behavior." The general assumption which underlies the study is that economic and other "pressures and deprivations" do not count for very much in the determination of a worker's attitudes; far more important is the structure of the worker's social relationships, which "determine . . . how he perceives these deprivations . . . and their objective impact on him." More specifically, *"the social pressures to which he is exposed at work play a major role in determining his political views."*

The book's general findings will hold few surprises for most people informed about Cuba. The great majority of the workers believed that they had more influence on the government after the Revolution than before; a sizable majority rejected general elections; nearly three-quarters of the workers held "favorable" attitudes toward the Revolution, while the remainder were either "indecisive" or "hostile."

As for some of Zeitlin's more specific findings, some are expected, some unexpected, some very novel. In the order in which they appear, his conclusions are: workers who suffered high unemployment and underemployment before the Revolution were more favorably disposed toward the Revolutionary Government and had been more pro-Communist before the Revolution; the Revolution won the support of *both* high and low income workers; and the " 'lesson' of unemployment, once learned, stays with the workers, and high wages do not suffice to make them forget it." (Chapter 2)

Black workers expressed more support for the Revolution than white workers, even making allowance for the higher incidence of unemployment among blacks; black workers' support for the Revolution, compared with support for the Communist Party in the pre-revolutionary years was relatively strong, chiefly because of the



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Revolution's own anti-racist policies. (Chapter 3) Skilled workers supported the Revolution as much as unskilled workers, but had been more pro-Communist before 1959, perhaps because many worked in the sugar mills where the Communists were best organized, perhaps because skilled workers considered themselves "more exploited" than unskilled workers, due to the fact that wage differentials between the two groups were often narrow and uneven. (Chapter 4)

Men had a more positive attitude about both the Revolution and the Communists than women. (Chapter 5) The "political differences between workers of different social origins in our sample are not large. Only sugar workers' sons, or workers who had been sugar workers, stand out as a distinct group in their pre-revolutionary attitudes toward the Communists and their attitudes toward the Revolution." (Chapter 6) As for the connection between the size of industrial plant and support for the Revolution, there was no correlation; the Revolution probably "tapped the latent or nativistic radicalism of the workers in the small plants . . . and at the same time received the support of the pro-Communist workers in the larger plants." (Chapter 7) The "workers whose attitudes toward work were transformed positively by the nationalization of industry are more likely than other workers to support the Revolution, and . . . especially distinct, given their unanimous support of the Revolution, are the workers who attribute their changed work attitudes to the abolition of alienation." (Chapter 8)

Workers whose attitudes in their youth were forged in periods of political struggle, especially the "rebel generation of Fidel Castro, the generation of '53," were heavy supporters of the Revolution, compared with workers in other age groups. (Chapter 9) And finally "the vast majority of revolutionary workers, though living through a socialist revolution and a period especially likely to arouse passions against the 'internal enemy,' believe in freedom of speech for opponents of the Revolution." (Chapter 10)

Zeitlin explains these and other correlations between workers' attitudes toward the Revolution and the Communists and their socio-economic position on the basis of various Marxist and non-Marxist sociological theories. Apart from throwing light on why some Cuban workers "made common cause with the bourgeoisie," *Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class* provides a useful critical summary of theoretical and empirical studies of the working classes in both the developed and underdeveloped coun-



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tries, ranging from Marx's own writings to contemporary studies of French and North American workers.

The overwhelming impression Zeitlin conveys is that the *particular* irrationalities of Cuban capitalism go a long way toward explaining the massive support given to the Revolution by a working class which neither won the military victory over the Batista government nor led the social revolution against Cuban and United States capital. The key variables seem to be regular seasonal unemployment, sugar, race, and youth, all of them excepting the latter closely related to the economic role of Cuba as an appendage to the United States economy. Zeitlin's book clearly confirms the thesis of the internationalization of the class struggle—or its displacement, which sets country against country first, and class against class within the particular country second.

In the reviewer's opinion, the major weaknesses of Zeitlin's study are twofold, both the fault of his method. In the first place, as Marx drove home in his own historical writings, "class" is not a constant but a *process*. It is not enough that a group of men and women stand objectively the same in relation to ownership of the means of production; it is also necessary for them to organize themselves, produce their own leaders, develop their own programs, and get themselves into motion before they constitute a class in the Marxist sense. If the Cuban working class did not constitute a class *in this sense* in the summer of 1962, then this should be said, and the resulting problems dealt with accordingly.

The cross-sectional correlations which Zeitlin relies on for his major source of primary data could not of course reveal the Cuban working class as a process, an historical movement; only a specifically historical study using the dialectical method could accomplish this. The consequences of the non-historical method are plain: we have no basis for understanding the role of the Cuban working class in the *making of the Revolution* (the author does sketch in the *making of the working class* by the development of the world capitalist system). We have thus no basis for comprehending the role of the Cuban working class in the future—we do not know whether Fidel has the active participation of the working class in the revolutionary process, or merely its passive consent; nor do we have even the beginnings of an answer to the fundamental problem facing all socialist countries—whether the working class is able to move against the bureaucratic tendencies which seem to emerge in societies as different as China's and Eastern Europe's. To put the point another way, Zeitlin is con-



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cerned with attitudes, feelings, and opinions at a particular moment in time; he largely ignores *actions*. There arises therefore as a result of the method itself a separation of thought and action, or an absence of *praxis*.

In the second place, from a sociological point of view, Zeitlin's method for explaining working-class attitudes alone leaves much to be desired. Excepting the chapter on "Alienation and Revolution," which is far and away the most provocative section of the book, he fails to analyze worker attitudes by reference to the *relations of production*—the relation between wage labor and capital. Put another way, his analysis is incomplete: there are few references to the role of United States capital in Cuba, the relation between Cuban and foreign capital, or the role of the pre-revolutionary state, in particular with regard to working-class influence or representation in the pre-revolutionary state, and certainly there is no analysis of the changing relations of production between 1958 and 1962, either in their totality or at the level of the industry or plant. That such an analysis is needed is emphasized by the fact brought out by Leo Huberman and Paul Sweezy in their new book on Cuba, *Socialism in Cuba,* that the tremendous enthusiasm for the Revolution in the first years was largely due to the ability of the government to "draw on reserves and unutilized resources" and thus provide large *temporary* material benefits to the peasants and workers.

Of course, the reviewer may be asking too much; a detailed study of the production relations at the level of the plant, industry, region, or even the economy as a whole is no doubt impossible for any single investigator. After all, *Revolutionary Politics and the Cuban Working Class* is the first detailed quantitative study of worker attitudes in a revolutionary situation ever written, and deserves praise for that reason alone. Certainly, if the definitive study of the working class in the Cuban Revolution is ever published, Zeitlin's study will remain an indispensable source of raw materials and insights.

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The life of just one human being is worth more than all the wealth of the richest man on earth.

—*Che Guevara*



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# WORLD EVENTS

*By Scott Nearing*

### *Is Socialism a Workable Alternative?*

At the present stage in the Great War there are three major possibilities. One of these is represented by the Nixon administration in Washington; the second by the de Gaulle administration in France; the third by the program and promise of socialism. Nixon and de Gaulle place their hopes on the workability of reformed monopoly capitalism. Nixon would reform capitalism in a way that would permit the continued expansion of the fast-growing American Empire. De Gaulle would reform capitalism in a way that would unify West Europe under French direction. The socialists' bid for leadership rests on the proposition that monopoly capitalists have exhausted themselves in futile rivalry and that collectivism expressed in some variant of socialism offers mankind the safest and surest path of escape from the dead-end street in which 1969 bourgeois society huddles, doubts, fears, and whimpers.

### *Should We Give the Nixons and De Gaulles Another Chance?*

Fifty years ago the bourgeois world faced the same problem under different leadership. Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Orlando were the acclaimed leaders of the bourgeois West. Each represented a particular national outlook. They were united in their belief that private-enterprise competitive economy, using the agencies of sovereign, representative governments, offered the best way out of the stalemated dilemma that followed war's end in 1918.

There was general agreement among spokesmen from Washington, London, Paris, and Rome that a continuation of armed struggle among the great monopoly-capitalist empires of the period was undesirable, because of popular unrest expressed in



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the revolutions that had broken out in Mexico, China, Russia, Austro-Hungary, and Germany. At all costs this dark menace to bourgeois society must be bought off or stamped out. But how?

All of the bourgeois leaders at the Versailles Peace Conference were reformers. Some called themselves socialists. All realized the danger to bourgeois society of a peoples' revolution. All agreed that something must be done to head off the revolutionary upsurge, while re-establishing the "law and order" which had flowered in four years of wholesale destruction and mass murder from 1914 to 1918.

Since people, especially the people of Europe, were heartily sick of destroying and killing, the likeliest course was to punish the German "aggressors"—strip them of their colonial possessions, disarm them sufficiently to render them incapable of beginning another war, and charge the war costs to them in the form of heavy indemnities.

President Wilson, a historian and political scientist by profession, insisted upon a more structural reform in international relations. Reluctantly his colleagues at the Peace Conference conceded the point and agreed upon a League of Nations, from which—at least for the time being—dangerous enemies like Germany and the revolutionaries in Russia and Mexico were to be excluded. With even greater reluctance spokesmen for the Allies agreed, after a decade of discussion, to call a general disarmament conference in Geneva.

The two decades which followed 1919 were notable in four respects: (1) The Disarmament Conference broke up in 1933, and was followed by a new arms race. (2) Efforts to unify or coordinate Western Europe fizzled. (3) Enemy countries smarting under military defeat and economic demoralization, abandoned the older forms of private enterprise and substituted some type of fascism. (4) The Soviet Union began to build socialism with its first Five-Year Plan in 1928.

The outcome of four years of destruction and slaughter was a Europe still divided into national states: one of them, the Soviet Union; Germany and Britain with socialist parties in office if not in power; fascist parties taking over in Italy, the



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Balkans, and Germany and a new line-up gradually emerging; the Allies, headed by Britain and France, backed by the United States; and the Central Powers, Germany and Italy, supported by Japan.

### *Another General War*

Civil war in Spain, beginning with the overthrow of the monarchy in 1932 and leading to the large-scale intervention of Italy and Germany after 1936, speeded up the arms race and touched off the General War of 1939-1945.

During the three decades from 1914 to 1945 European governments ceased to be chiefly monarchist and became increasingly republican. Much of Europe's economy abandoned traditional private enterprise and passed through a fascist stage. Eastern Europe, overrun by fascists and liberated by Soviet armies, inaugurated socialist regimes, while Western Europe, militarily occupied and subsidized by Washington, was organized into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and led by the United States in the crusade to check the advance of socialism-communism and restore some form of monopoly capitalism throughout the planet.

### *A Re-Divided Europe*

The 1950's ended with Europe sharply divided: West Europe capitalist; East Europe socialist; with a shaded area running from Scandinavia (which was still monarchist) to a republican Switzerland. Scandinavia had reached the welfare-state level. Switzerland was comfortably conservative.

West Europe continued to be capitalist, but almost everywhere Socialist parties were sharing power or providing strong opposition to the bourgeoisie. In France and Italy large and well-organized Communist parties were kept from power by strong centrist coalitions, usually including at least some of the Socialists.

Side by side with these political changes and underlying all of them, revolutions in science and technology were making themselves felt in highly industrialized areas and were having a profound effect upon personal life, upon man's control over the national environment, and were influencing political and social relations almost everywhere.



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West Europe was subsidized and influenced by the United States. East Europe was shepherded by the Soviet Union.

### *The Two-Power World Comes and Goes*

Here was the "two-power world" which Marshal Jan Smuts had foreseen in 1943. But it was short-lived. Events surrounding the birth of the People's Republic of China in 1949 and the Korean War of 1950-1953, coupled with the economic and political rehabilitation of Japan, once again brought Asia into the foreground of world affairs. For a time it shared the spotlight with Europe. After 1954 it eclipsed Europe, forcing Washington to rearrange its priorities, make People's China Enemy Number One and concentrate its firepower on Southeast Asia. This realignment shifted the power-struggle Axis to Washington at one end and Peking at the other, forcing the third member of the world-power trinity into a centrist position. The consummation of this change was hastened by Mao Tse-tung's Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

### *Asia Takes the Spotlight*

Asia, with more than half of the planet's human population and an immense storehouse of its natural resources, moved quickly into position as the immediate battleground of the world power struggle. At the same time Asia became the home of more than four-fifths of the billion human beings who are living in countries dedicated to building socialism.

Two general wars and the planet-wide shift of a billion colonial peoples from imperial vassalage to nominal independence had downgraded all of the chief European powers and made the United States cock of the monopoly-capitalist walk.

### *Washington to the Rescue*

The defeat and dismemberment of the Japanese Empire in 1945, followed by the Korean War in the 1950's and the Vietnam War in the 1960's had provided Washington with two strategic footholds in the Asian mainland.

With Canada and Latin America largely in the bag, Washington had the run of the Western Hemisphere. The downgrading of the chief European powers, their restoration



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by Marshall Plan aid, and the massive intrusion of U.S. military forces and of U.S. trade and investment into Europe left Asia and Africa standing between the American oligarchy and its program of planet-wide domination and development. Temporarily at least, Africa was being frustrated and stymied by its formidable internal contradictions. Asia alone stood between Washington and its "manifest destiny" to police and exploit the planet.

Neutralism, sponsored by Prime Minister Nehru and strongly supported by important Asian nations, looked like a pushover to American policy makers. After they "lost" China in 1949, the spectacular unification of this nation of half a billion human inhabitants and its dedication to building socialism brought both ends of the planet's land mass under socialist control—the Soviet Union in the west and center, People's China in the east. In terms of overall strategy the combination was unbeatable—so long as the two countries and their dozen sister socialist states continued to cooperate.

### *People's China Versus the Soviet Union*

On the face of the returns, these two countries with their allied and associated builders of socialism were in an impregnable position astride the Eurasian land mass. With their monopoly-capitalist enemies forever feuding over profits and power, time worked for the socialists, so long as the Soviet-Chinese alliance held firm. But as early as 1957 the Soviet-Chinese alliance, agreed upon in 1951, began to open up at the seams.

At first the strain involved only matters of detail like China's Great Leap of 1958. Then the disagreements extended to such questions of ideology as the treatment of independence movements among oppressed peoples and the problem of coexistence with the imperialists. By 1960 the thousands of Soviet specialists assigned to China were back in the Soviet Union, while the thousands of Chinese students studying in the Soviet Union were back in China.

From that point the breach between the two countries was widened until it led to the bloody border clashes in the late winter and early spring of 1969.



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### *Can Socialism Meet the Challenge?*

Who was responsible? Each side lays the blame on the other. History may give a satisfactory answer. Meanwhile the Soviet-Chinese alliance is a thing of the past. The two most populous and most powerful socialist countries are so far apart that, at this writing, it is impossible to say whether a delegation from the Chinese Communist Party will even be present at the conference of Communist parties called to meet in Moscow on June 5, 1969.

Ever since the break-up of the Roman Empire the West has paid a heavy price for contradictions, rivalry, and conflict between its leading nations. Feudal Europe was riddled by civil strife and by wars between European powers. Bourgeois Europe between 1914 and 1945 was bankrupted and shattered by a European civil war.

One of the proud boasts of socialists has been that unlike their competing capitalist opponents, they stood for solidarity, for cooperation, for unity. Evolution in the means of production led up to this unity. Common sense supported it. Destiny promised it. Planet-wide socialism seemed all but inevitable in the early years of the present century. This was the theory of the inevitability of socialism. In practice the late winter and early spring of 1969 saw the two most powerful erstwhile socialist comrades shooting at one another over the possession of an unimportant island in the Ussuri River in far Siberia.

The power struggle between the Soviet Union and People's China is of major concern. If the two countries continue their feud, socialism will be split into two armed camps, one headed by the Soviet Union, the other by People's China. This cold-hot war will take precedence over other aspects of the Great War. If the two socialist rivals can get together and stay together, United States intrusion into Asia can be turned back, imperialism will suffer a major defeat, and Asia may well become the first socialist continent. In this context socialism will become a workable alternative to monopoly capitalism.

In a very real sense, it is up to the socialists. United they stand. Divided they fail to take advantage of a supreme historical opportunity.



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## Vacation Ideas for MR Readers

# *from* GUARDIAN TOURS

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(*Continued from inside front cover*)

with Latin America, especially Huberman and Sweezy, *Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution;* Edward Boorstein, *The Economic Transformation of Cuba;* and the collection of essays, *Whither Latin America?* We would like to suggest to readers who may be in a position to influence such matters that Leo Huberman's *We, the People* and *Man's Worldly Goods* are ideal for use in high school courses in, respectively, U.S. history and the history of the Western world. They make their subjects alive and exciting in a way unmatched by other works no matter what political point of view they are written from.

Not long ago we received a letter from the Cuban agency which is charged with fostering friendship with foreign peoples—the Instituto Cubano de Amistad con los Pueblos (ICAP). It was a query as to whether MR had been receiving reading materials ICAP sends out regularly. "In addition," the letter concluded, "we would be grateful if you could send us the names and addresses of those of your friends who might be interested in receiving informative materials about our country, so that we might include them on our mailing list." Any MR readers who would like to receive such materials should send their names and addresses to *ICAP, 17 No. 301,* Havana, Cuba.

We have reported from time to time in this space on developments in the cases of Pierre Vallières and Charles Gagnon, two of the young leaders of the Front de Libération Québécoise (FLQ), the revolutionary liberation movement of Canada's French-speaking province. (MR published Pierre Vallières' article "Quebec: Nationalism and the Working Class" in the issue of February, 1965; and MR Press is planning to bring out an English translation of his historical-political-autobiographical work *Les Nègres Blancs d'Amérique*). The latest news is both very welcome and very encouraging: On April 2, after a seven-week trial, Charles Gagnon was acquitted of a charge of manslaughter which arose out of a bomb incident in a Montreal labor dispute three years ago. Gagnon was represented by a 27-year-old lawyer, Robert Lemieux, who took two days in summarizing the defense case before the jury. The fact that an all-male French-speaking jury deliberated only two and a half hours before acquitting the defendant is a heartening indication that the Canadian establishment can no longer count on convicting Quebec national liberation fighters of crimes simply because of their beliefs and writings.

But Charles Gagnon is still in jail serving a two-year sentence on a charge of conspiracy to commit an armed robbery which never took place; and Pierre Vallières is also in jail serving a sentence of "perpetual imprisonment" on a murder charge arising out of a bombing in another labor dispute. Lawyers for the defense are confident that neither of these convictions can stand up on appeal, and they are hopeful that the prosecution will see the futility of bringing the two men to trial on the numerous (five in one case, six in the other) charges on which they have already been indicted. Defending cases of this kind and educating public opinion on their real purpose and meaning are of course costly operations. A committee entitled "Le Comité d'Aide au Groupe Vallières-Gagnon" has been active on the defendants' behalf and welcomes all financial aid. If any MR readers want to help, you can send the money to us and we will see that it reaches the committee.



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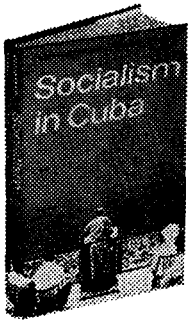


# SOCIALISM IN CUBA

by

Leo Huberman

and

Paul M. Sweezy

IS NOW AVAILABLE

The authors' *Cuba: Anatomy of a Revolution,* published in 1960, remains one of the best books on the Cuban revolution. The present book, nearly nine years later, is their assessment of how well socialism is working in Cuba. It shares with the first book an authoritative character. The authors have followed the events closely during this period and write from a background of wide personal acquaintance with the people, the problems, and the issues. They are strongly in favor of the revolution, but they do not feel it necessary to disregard the many difficulties that beset it, and in that sense their book is an objective one.

Progress, they find, was easiest to achieve in the fields of education and health, and it is here that the authors record truly amazing advances.

In the economic field, the obstacles in the form of a legacy of centuries of underdevelopment and exploitation are much more formidable, and Cuba's achievements have been correspondingly more modest—though by no means unimpressive.

The authors review the reorganization and reorientation of the economy, following the break with the United States. The shift from the early policy of industrialization to the present policy of stressing agriculture is described and analyzed.

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